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BARNSTAPLE
DURING THE
GREAT CIVIL WAR 1642-1646

RICHARD W. COTTON

o

BARNSTAPLE

AND THE

NORTHERN PART OF DEVONSHIRE

DURING THE

GREAT CIVIL WAR,

1642-1646.

BY

RICHARD W. COTTON.

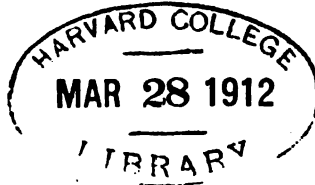
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PREFACE.

IT was originally my intention to write a familiar historical sketch of BARNSTAPLE and its people during the great Civil War of the seventeenth century. This is mainly what is now submitted to the reader ; but the story has, almost inevitably, expanded into a detailed account of the war as it affected North Devon.

The annals of an English fortified town which changed hands four times during the four years' struggle between Charles the First and the Parliament might well have been expected to contain much of local and not a little of general interest. The contemporary public records of Barnstaple, the town to which I refer, are in this respect not wholly disappointing ; but they are far from being copious, and the most that can, perhaps, be said of them is that, so far as they go, they are valuable and suggestive. No such chronicler, however, as, for instance, the

author of the diary of the siege of Lyme Regis, of the time of the Civil War, has handed down to us a narrative of the passing occurrences day by day ; no such minute and voluminous details as those of the siege accounts of Plymouth, of the same period, have been preserved. Of the municipal documents of Barnstaple a mass is known to have actually perished, through almost inconceivable neglect, within comparatively recent years. Those that survive, although unusually rich and extending from the fourteenth century downward, are in a fragmentary state, and the records of the period to which this relation has reference are few and disconnected. At the same time, there is not much room for doubt that during the disturbed period of the war the affairs of the Corporation lapsed into confusion ; that no detailed accounts of an expenditure obviously abnormal were preserved ; and that after the first year of the war, when the Corporation was practically superseded by a military government, no records of the municipal transactions were, in fact, kept.

A connected account of what took place in the chief town of North Devon during the Civil War has not been previously attempted. It is true that Mr. J. B. Gribble collected a few materials of considerable value—mostly “cribbed” from original documents in the then jealously guarded archives of the town, many of which have since disappeared—for his *Memoirs of Barnstaple*, published in 1830 ; but he made no very effective use of them ; his inferences were often erroneous ; and he did not pretend to give a continuous, much less a complete, narrative. Mr.

J. R. Chanter devoted a few pages to the subject in his *Sketches of some Striking Incidents in the History of Barnstaple*, which appeared in 1865, throwing upon it some new light and attracting to it fresh interest ; but he professed to give no more than a brief and imperfect summary of the local transactions of the Civil War period. This may be said to have been all the existing literature of the subject.

It has been my object to recover the details—and in my estimation no details could be too insignificant—of this episode of surpassing interest in the history of Barnstaple. The surviving records of the period among the archives of the borough, possessing the invaluable quality of their local colouring, have supplied me with, of course, important, if scanty, materials. I have collected others from the works of historians who were cognizant of, and in many instances took part in, the events passing around them ; from the concurrent ephemeral literature which so copiously illustrates the progress of the war ; from memoirs and official papers ; and from contemporary letters, several of which have been now for the first time printed from the original MSS. Generally, I have had recourse to original sources for my information. Local oral traditions relating to the war have been of little use to me ; they are few and, it is scarcely necessary to add, untrustworthy.

With the view of giving, so far as might be, the complexion of the time to this account of the transactions in Barnstaple and North Devon during the eventful years 1642–1646, I have not hesitated

to extract contemporary notices, and to utilize contemporary documents pertinent to the story, that have fallen under my observation or rewarded a not inconsiderable research. In this respect I may have perhaps followed too freely the bent of the antiquary, and the method, I am aware, has its shortcomings; but it is one, nevertheless, which, for the purpose of catching the spirit and sentiment of a past time, may be allowed to have its advantages.

Barnstaple, if not one of the pivots upon which, during the Civil War, great or critical military movements turned, was at least more or less directly affected by all the military operations in the West of England, and the marching and counter-marching in and through Devonshire, which for nearly four years kept the whole county in a blaze. If the annals of Barnstaple during that period are few, it can scarcely be said, according to the well-known aphorism, that the town was therefore happy. Like those of most of the partisan towns, its inhabitants were, at one time or another, the victims of arbitrary authority, requisitions, exactions, and pillage. Once, at least, its streets were the scene of actual conflict and bloodshed.

Purposely, Barnstaple is the centre of whatever interest there may be in this relation; but necessarily my scope has extended over a larger area, and embraced transactions with which, if the scene of them was more strictly speaking the county, this town was in some way connected. I have, as far as possible, however, limited this scope to the district, vaguely defined it may be, which is familiarly known

to us as North Devon. Of most of the local military incidents it cannot perhaps be generally said, any more than it can be asserted of the numerous desultory skirmishes which occurred over the greater part of England, and produced what has been called "a fever of sporadic conflict," that they had any distinguishable influence upon the final result of the war. Yet two of the most graphically interesting and politically not least important battles of the whole war were fought within twenty-five miles of Barnstaple. The battle of Stratton, in which Cornishmen and Devonians were pitted against each other, resulted in the defeat of the Parliamentary forces raised in Devonshire, and by freeing Hopton's Cornish army, enabled him to combine with the Royalist main body and thus materially to conduce to the ascendancy which the King's cause attained in the second year of the war. The battle of Torrington, fought in this corner of Devonshire, and so lightly passed over by Lord Clarendon, the historian of the Rebellion, was practically fatal to the royal cause in the West—the only ground whereon, at that late period of the struggle, it had any chance of recovery.

It is remarkable that the county of Devon, so remote from the point of initial impulse, should have borne, whether by chance or by the exigencies of military strategy, the large share that it undoubtedly did of the brunt of the war and the calamities of the time. Many of the transactions of the war which took place in Devonshire were of course links in the chain of operations extending

over a much wider field. Others, to which prominence is intentionally given in the following pages, were more local in their character—that is to say, they originated in the county, and were the achievements of locally-raised and native forces—and as such, and for his purpose unimportant, they have been passed over, and properly so, by the general historian. The details thus neglected are, I believe, precisely those which are of most value to the local inquirer. The skirmishes and battles which took place on Devonshire soil, and in which Devonshire men, whether Royalist or Parliamentarian, fought and bled, have something more than an historical interest for many of us. Their story, however, is even locally now but little known; it has been gradually disappearing in the mist of the past, and is recoverable, if at all, from scattered, long-forgotten, and not easily accessible sources. The chapter of our county history which relates to the Civil War has not been perhaps so well filled up as to render such details as I have referred to superfluous or unacceptable. It is remarkable, indeed, how little has been done for this portion of the history of Devonshire. There is absolutely no work that has specially dealt with it. The Messrs. Lysons merely summarize a description of the war as it affected the whole county in eight or nine pages of their *Topographical and Historical Account of Devonshire* which is still the *facile princeps* of our county histories. This and the separate notices in their proper places throughout the work are derived chiefly from Lord Clarendon's *History of the*

Rebellion and Civil War and Vicars's *Parliamentary Chronicle*; but Clarendon is occasionally imperfect—as witness the fact that one of the most considerable of the conflicts in Devonshire is dismissed by him in less than a paragraph, while another is not even alluded to—and Vicars is a fanatical and exaggerated and, at best, but a second-hand authority. By far the most accurate and copious description, so far as it goes, of the war in Devonshire is contained in an article in the *Retrospective Review* (vol. xii. p. 179), by Mr. J. H. Merivale; but unfortunately it stops short at the end of the first year of the war.

Military transactions necessarily form much of the burden of the following pages. As a non-military writer I have described them from the ordinary point of view, and too probably may have erred in technicalities. I have incidentally touched upon some of the political and social features of the period, and have interspersed short biographical notices of prominent Devonians, whose names are, in many instances, still as household words with us, who took part in the transactions described.

The causes which brought about the great Civil War have been lightly passed over; they belong to a chapter of English history with which everybody is supposed to be familiar; and they have been the subject of countless dissertations. Any detailed relation of them would scarcely have been expected in a work of this kind, and a critical treatment of the subject would have been superfluous and out of place. If I have adverted to them at all, it has been

for the purpose of showing, by a few illustrations, how some of the larger political movements during the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the war bore upon local affairs, and likewise for the purpose of introducing the immediate subject. If I have referred to the general progress of the war and its varying phases in the body of the work, it has been only so far as was necessary to explain the relation to them of the local events in North Devon.

For convenience, I have divided the substance of this work, not into chronological periods nor into chapters of uniform length, but into Parts marked out by certain distinct epochs in the history of Barnstaple during the period from 1642 to 1646 inclusive. This plan, I venture to think, gives more lucidity to a narrative which may need all such help to make it intelligible.

I have reserved for this place the particular acknowledgment of my indebtedness to my friend, John Roberts Chanter, Esq., of Fort Hill, not only for much personal information, but also for the assistance that I have derived from his important selections from the Municipal Records of Barnstaple which, I may almost say, were the original suggestion of this work. Mr. Chanter has earned the gratitude of every historical and antiquarian student by his discovery and preservation of these ancient and valuable records, and by his turning to account a familiarity with legal and municipal antiquities and an intimate local knowledge in amply elucidating

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them. I have obtained from these recovered records many facts and details to which, in most instances, I have been able to give their due chronological order and proper significance.

R. W. C.

WOODLEIGH,
NEWTON ABBOT,
1889.





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INTRODUCTORY.

BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR.

HISTORICALLY, Barnstaple is perhaps best known as one of those seaport towns of Devonshire which figure, not inconspicuously, in the maritime annals of our country, and from whose harbours proceeded most of those enterprises—legitimate or illegitimate, half mercantile, half piratical—which characterize more particularly the Elizabethan period.

As far back as in the reign of Henry VIII. a Barnstaple fleet resorted for fishing to the coasts of Newfoundland. In Queen Elizabeth's days ships hailing from the North Devon port were to be met with, trafficking their salt-fish and the woollen fabrics, then of much repute and the manufacture of which was the chief home industry of the town, among the Western Islands, within the Straits of Gibraltar, and along the shores of France and the Peninsula. During the fitful struggle of our

countrymen with Spanish domination, armed reprisal-ships from the river Taw, at the head of the estuary of which the town of Barnstaple is situated, ranged the Western seas even as far as the Guinea Coast, bringing home prizes freighted with Spanish gold. When the Armada approached the English Channel, Barnstaple and its member port, Bideford, sent a contingent of five ships—some say more—to join the squadron of Sir Francis Drake.

To these Western towns, again, may be traced the very beginnings of our colonial enterprise. The second unsuccessful expedition under Sir Walter Raleigh's patent sailed from the North Devon port; and the band of pioneers, all of whom perished in the Virginian forests, came, it is presumed, from Barnstaple and Bideford. Later, about the year 1620, when settlements of more promise had been founded in America, considerable intercourse sprang up between Barnstaple and Virginia, Bermuda and New England.¹ Some settlers from North Devon, pitching their tents on the neck of land at the bottom of Cape Cod Bay in New England, gave the name "Barnstable," which is retained, to their settlement, perpetuating the corrupt but more common spelling of the word which prevailed in that century. The American town is no doubt still as flourishing as it was in the year 1839, when the

¹ It is an interesting fact that it was by a Barnstaple "bark" belonging to Mr. John Delbridge, trading in those parts, that the first batch of semi-tropical seeds and plants was transported from Bermuda to Virginia. (*The Historye of the Bermudaes or Summer Islands*, Hakluyt Society, 1882, p. 276.)

inhabitants enthusiastically celebrated the two hundredth anniversary of its incorporation. Salem, founded a little earlier, now famous in more ways than can here be conveniently mentioned, had been originally called "Bastable"—a still more corrupt form of the word Barnstable—the name having been given to the place, as Captain John Smith informs us,¹ by Prince Charles, afterwards Charles the First.

Although it is not in its maritime or commercial aspect that Barnstable will figure in the following pages, the characteristics of the town and the turn of mind of its people will be best understood from the foregoing cursory sketch. The merchants who were engaged in the enterprises which have been reviewed, and who by almost a birthright composed the municipal governing body, were of a type to which there is now no precise resemblance. Many of them were allied to some of the best families of the neighbouring landed gentry, and, if we may credit the armorial devices which are still to be seen displayed upon the ornate monuments in the parish church, they themselves laid claim to good and ancient lineage. Their strong local feeling is everywhere apparent. They were stiff upholders of the rights and privileges of their ancient town, and were generous benefactors to their poorer townsmen, as their almshouses and other charitable foundations still survive to testify.

The topography of Barnstable has changed but little during the last two centuries and a half. Anciently a walled town and one of remote anti-

¹ *Works*, Arber's Ed., 1884, p. 949.

quity, Barnstaple retains distinctly to this day the outlines of its earliest fortifications, although the walls themselves had sunk into ruin before the time of Henry VIII. The intramural streets have the same lineaments, singularly well preserved, as in the days of Charles the First ; but, unhappily, the riverside quays, with which so many local historical incidents were associated, have been unwisely sacrificed, in wanton disregard of all such considerations as well as of æsthetic propriety, to the demands of railway engineers. High Street, which probably since the time of the Roman occupation had intersected the intramural town, was the main artery, so to speak, of civic life which appropriately centred at the High Cross, where stood the Guildhall, and, behind it, the parish church of St. Peter. The frontages of but very few buildings now show any traces of the domestic architecture of the first half of the seventeenth century ; but in the secluded low back-parlours of some old houses are still to be seen the somewhat coarse but highly-decorated plaster ceilings and the carved oak wainscoting of that period. There are not now many survivors of the generation which saw the last of the old Guildhall, built about the middle of the sixteenth century ; and within the recollection of the present writer the last two of the town gateways, each a double arch of massive stonework, yielded to the supposed exigencies of modern traffic, and were unhappily destroyed. Two other gateways, which seem to have been in existence in Leland's time, about the year 1540, disappeared at some unknown subsequent date. Leland, on his

visit to the town, specially remarked that the houses were built of stone—domestic architectural construction being still generally of timber. Camden, who wrote half-a-century later, mentions the reputation of the town for “elegant building.” Indeed, by a remarkable consensus of contemporary opinion, it was reckoned, at the time of which I am writing, one of the pleasantest of English towns. In a political sermon preached before the House of Commons in the year 1646, the Rev. Samuel Torshel calls it “neat Barnstaple”—an epithet which could have been suggested, I imagine, only by personal observation. Ray, the naturalist, soon after the Restoration, visited Barnstaple, when but little change could have taken place in its material features since the time of the Civil War. He describes it as “a very handsome and large town; . . . the houses are all neat and in good repair; the streets are well paved, so that one may walk in them in slippers in the midst of winter.”¹ “It is blessed,” says Guillim, or rather Blome, in Guillim’s *Heraldry*, “with a sweet and wholesome Air, hath fair and well built Buildings altogether of stone and brick.”² And Dr. Yonge, who visited it in the year 1674, with peculiar orthography writes: “Its one of the pleasants towns I ever saw being round on a plaine fayr, streight broad streets and many good houses of old fashion.”³ Other features

¹ *Memorials of Ray*, 1846, p. 183.

² Fifth edition, 1676, part ii. p. 172.

³ “Autobiography of Dr. James Yonge, F.R.S.,” *Trans. Devonshire Association*, xiii. 338.

connected with the town, and quite as distinctive, have been overlooked by these observers. At one end of the water front of the town a picturesque thirteenth-century bridge spanned the river, with sixteen pointed arches—as yet unburdened with modern accretions. Looking down the river, a wide reach expanded westward, converted seemingly into a lake by the overlapping hills in the distance. At the other end of the river front were the Castle Hill and Green, then a public resort, where the pastimes of Elizabethan days still lingered, and over which the rush of every flood tide into the river wafted breezes straight from the Atlantic. With these data it requires no great exercise of the imagination to picture the external aspects of Barnstaple when its streets alternately echoed to the clatter of Essex's lifeguards and the roistering of Goring's disreputable troopers.

The population of Barnstaple in the middle of the seventeenth century can of course be computed only approximately. I have been able, by well-known methods, to estimate it as probably not much exceeding 4,000. The municipal government of the town was at that time wielded by a Corporation, consisting of a Mayor, two Aldermen, and twenty-two Capital Burgesses, who derived their authority from a charter of James I. This charter confirmed to the town certain rights, privileges, and immunities with which it had been, in fact, endowed by successive monarchs, and which, it was traditionally believed, had been originally derived from King Æthelstan. The government of the Corporation was all but

despotic; and it was characterized by the usual civic and social peculiarities of the period; but it was on the whole beneficent. The dignity of the Mayor was amply sustained and protected, and terrible were the consequences of any "opprobrious, vile, slanderous, dishonest or unseemly words" spoken of him. Aliens had little favour; none could set up any craft, mystery, or occupation without license of the Mayor, on pain of imprisonment. The streets were lighted at night until nine o'clock during the winter, from Allhallowtide, by lantern and candle, which the principal inhabitants hung out at their front doors. Watch and ward were kept from sunset to sunrise by the chief townsmen—the survival, after three hundred years, of the obligation created by the Statute of Winchester in the time of Edward I. The supervision of the morals of the inhabitants was characterized by the austerity of Puritanism. Female immorality was punished by the open whipping of the offender through the town, and male culprits were sent to prison. Of sanitary regulations there is not much sign. Some attention was paid to outward decencies, and no man could raise a dunghill before his own door, or suffer "hoggs" to roam; but the frequency of visitations of the plague was probably due to insanitary habits of which we have now no adequate conception.

I may now pass on to a review of the local life as it was affected by the political agitations of the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the Civil War.

The inhabitants of Barnstaple, a maritime town, were of course familiar with the obnoxious impost of ship-money, which is popularly and correctly supposed to have been one of the proximate causes of the Rebellion. This impost was a revival of an old royal prerogative which had fallen into desuetude, and in the reign of Elizabeth had become merely a call for volunteer ships, the hire of which was honestly paid for by the Crown. Thus a levy was made in the years 1619-20, in the reign of James I., for the alleged purpose of suppressing pirates who infested the Channel. The tax was personal in its incidence, and was directed to be paid not only by the merchants of every seaport town, but by all who took "any benefit by the port." Under that levy, £500 was demanded of Barnstaple; Exeter being assessed at the same sum.

1626
In the year 1626, at the opening of the reign of Charles the First, the Privy Council again made a demand upon the seaport towns for furnishing and setting forth ships, ostensibly to guard the narrow seas, whilst the fleet was engaged upon the expedition to the Isle of Rhe. This demand was apparently the first of its kind which met with overt opposition, and it signally failed, at least in Devonshire. "The country," says Walter Yonge, "for the most part did generally refuse to contribute towards setting forth these ships; as being unable by reason of many taxes and burthens upon them."¹

1627
In the following year the demand was repeated, but in a different form. Devonshire was ordered to

¹ *Diary of Walter Yonge, Esq.*, Camden Society, 1848, p. 93.

furnish eight ships, of which Barnstaple was to provide two. The towns were to supply the ships and the county the men and victuals. A meeting of the justices was to be held at Exeter for the purpose of considering what should be done. The result, it appears, was that the justices did nothing. Following upon this was another demand, in the year 1628, by the King and Council, for the raising of £17,400 from the county of Devon for the setting forth of a fleet; but, says Yonge, "our county refused to meddle therein."¹

1628

In October, 1634, the first writ was issued by the Privy Council for levying ship-money in the form of an assessment, "according to their substance," on the inhabitants of seaport towns. The assessment on Barnstaple for its share, with other towns of the county, in the cost of a ship of 400 tons, as apportioned, was £252 4s. 8d.² Gribble (*Memo-rials of Barnstaple*, p. 441), states that the total amount paid by Barnstaple under this assessment was upwards of £600, derived from a list of particular assessments "on the inhabitants and tene-ments," which list is also quoted by Mr. Chanter, and is estimated by him to represent at least £800 in total amount.³ Both were manifestly in error. We

1634

¹ *Diary*, Camden Society, 1848, p. 111.

² *Calendar of State Papers: Domestic*—1634-5, January 2, 1635.

³ *Records*, No. lv. This reference, as well as the similar ones which will follow, is to the selection of records from the Municipal Archives of Barnstaple, made by J. R. Chanter, Esq., in which he was assisted by the accomplished Master of the Barnstaple Grammar School, Thomas Wainwright, Esq. The extracts, copiously annotated, were printed from time to time as the work went on, in the two local

should not be surprised to find that the sum raised was less than the quota demanded; but certainly very much so if it proved to have been, as they read it, more than twice as much. The principle upon which ship-money was now levied seems to have been the same as that upon which subsidies had been usually raised, that is, by a rate on land and goods. It is probable, therefore, that these particular assessments represented mere fancy, or arbitrary, rateable values of moveable goods from which, by the Subsidy Act, 34 and 35 Henry VIII., c. 27, wearing apparel, plate, and jewels were excluded, fixed by the assessors (especially as the figures are all in round numbers), and not the actual sums levied. It is of interest to record the leading names, as they may be assumed to be those of the most substantial inhabitants at the time:—

Nicholas Delbridge,	rated at	£31
John Penrose	„	24
William Palmer	„	24
Nicholas Down	„	12
Richard Harris	„	12

A great many follow at £10, £5, £3, and £1, with a very few at 10s., which was the lowest value assessed in the case of the subsidy.¹ The Act already referred to provided for a graduated scale of payment at so much in the pound, the charge increasing in proportion to the means of the assessed; but whether or

newspapers. Published in such a form, which was in the circumstances the only practicable one, this extremely valuable collection must always be comparatively rare. I have referred to it in the Preface to this work.

¹ *Records*, No. lv.

not it was followed in the levy of ship-money is not apparent.

In the year 1635, the demand upon the county of Devon for ship-money was for providing a ship of 900 tons; and the assessment of £9,000 for this purpose was extended to the inland towns. This was the commencement of the fully-developed historical tax of ship-money. The effect was, of course, to relieve to some extent the seaport towns. At all events, the quota of Barnstaple in this case was only £100. In the following year there was a similar assessment; but at a meeting of the mayors of the corporation towns of Devonshire with the Sheriff, it appears that in an apportionment, in which all concurred, except the Mayor of Barnstaple, who protested, Exeter succeeded in relieving itself of £50, which was added to the quota of Barnstaple. Against this arrangement the town petitioned, but without avail, to the Privy Council. The petitioners of Barnstaple, it was neatly answered, had no doubt urged at the meeting of assessors of the county what they could to ease their own Corporation; but since they could not prevail with their neighbours, who best knew the ability of that town, the Council thought it not fit to alter what had been done in so orderly a way. The receipt for £150, accordingly paid by Richard Beaple, Mayor of Barnstaple, as the share of ship-money levied on the town, is extant.

In each of the two following years, 1636 and 1637, a similar assessment was made; but the money was obtained with some ominous difficulty: "The service has not passed without opposition, many

suffering distresses to be taken of their goods, and some base people have not spared to spatter the officers employed by the Sheriff with scandalous language."¹ By and by arrears began to accumulate, and conscientious and stubborn objections to the payment supervened. Demands are made by the Privy Council, viz., for £3 10s. from Richard Delbridge; 10s. from Julian Peard, widow; 15s. from Martin Blake, vicar; in default to appear before my Lords. Their several answers are as follows:—Delbridge refuses to pay, and will make answer to the same; Peard says she will pay none; and Blake says he will appear, according to order, before the Bishop of Exeter and render the reasons of his refusal.² The Vicar, on the side of the Philistines, is worth noting.

Gribble (*Memorials, &c.*, p. 442), on the further erroneous assumption that the whole amount of the assessment of the last three years fell on the maritime towns only, came to the absurd conclusion that Barnstaple must have paid ship-money at the rate of £1,350 per annum for five successive years!

By a primitive superstition it was held that the merchants of maritime towns were the only persons interested in keeping the neighbouring seas free of pirates—the chief object for which the tax was ostensibly levied. It was the extension of this original area of taxation that created most of the clamour against the impost which in itself was far

¹ *Calendar of State Papers: Domestic*—1637.

² *Ibid.*, 1639.

less onerous than our own income-tax.¹ But when ship-money became a mere pretence for fitting out ships, and rather, as Lord Clarendon admitted, "a spring and magazine that should have no bottom, and for an everlasting supply of all occasions," it was at least obviously unfair that it should be limited in its incidence to the seaport towns. Besides being like the proverbial last straw, ship-money was odious, chiefly, because it was taxation by arbitrary royal decree and without the authority of Parliament—a special heinousness to which the inquiring mind had become fully alive. It was resisted, as every one knows, by the illustrious Hampden, whose conduct, says Macaulay, met with the warm approbation of every respectable Royalist in England. But the legality of the impost was affirmed by an obsequious majority of the judges. "After that," said George Peard, one of the Members for Barnstaple, in a speech in the House of Commons, "I think not my gown my own."

As military transactions will inevitably form the most considerable part in the relation which follows, some account of the organization, equipment, and strength of the local armed forces of the County of Devon generally, and of the town of Barnstaple in particular, immediately before the breaking out of the Civil War, will be a convenient help to the

¹ Sir Anthony Weldon, a strong Parliamentary, complains that the grievance of gunpowder-men (who entered a man's house to dig up the floor of his cellar for saltpetre) is "far more pressing than shipmonie or any other that I knowe."

understanding of the martial details of the period following. The suddenness with which small bodies of armed men started up in the most unlikely places at the very commencement of the Civil War is remarkable; but the military organization of the country, rough and of essentially local character as it was, had been in reality kept up with considerable regularity during a long preceding period. It will be desirable to glance at this feature to understand how it was that such an apparently peaceful mercantile community as that of Barnstaple displayed an aptitude for arms and, as will be seen hereafter, no inconsiderable skill in the art of fortification, when the emergency arose. A standing army, it is scarcely necessary to say, was in the early part of the seventeenth century unknown in England. The only constitutional force was the Militia, which was raised by the Lord-Lieutenants of the counties; and all able-bodied men were liable to be impressed and enrolled by the constables of the several Hundreds for training and service. Such was the force which, as Wyot tells us, was raised in the Hundreds of Braunton and Fremington, and which, two hundred strong, was reviewed in the Castle Green at Barnstaple by Mr. Hugh Fortescue, its captain, in the Armada year 1588.¹ And such was the force which, in 1622, under Sir Robert Chichester, of Raleigh, was ordered to be ready at an hour's warning to concentrate at Ilfracombe, to resist an apprehended landing of a Spanish army.²

¹ "Wyot's Diary," Chanter's *Literary History of Barnstaple*, p. 94.

² *Diary of Walter Yonge, Esq.*, Camden Society, 1848, p. 57. Yonge

A few years before this, in 1613, orders appear to have been given by the Government of James I. for general musters of the trained soldiers of the counties. In May in that year, William, Earl of Bath, Lord-Lieutenant of Devon, writes to the Council, "that at musters in Devonshire, the trained bands are five thousand men, but not half of them know how to use their weapons. Asks an order that their sporting time, which they chiefly spend in hurling, should be given to exercising their weapons. Some able men refused to produce their horses and require punishment."¹ Hurling, by the way, is generally considered to have been an exclusively Cornish pastime. There seems to have been no lack of zeal on the part of the officers. Stow tells us that, on the establishment of the Artillery Company of London, in 1610, it was the habit of country gentlemen when in London to visit the Artillery Garden, and observe the exercise of arms there, which was excellent, and "being returned, they practised and used the same unto their trained bands."

An attempt was made to put the Militia upon a stricter footing in the year 1626, ostensibly "to defend his Majesty's kingdom and to withstand the attempts or invasion of his enemies."² At about

says that this was Sir *Richard* Chichester, which is a mistake. Sir Robert was Colonel of a regiment of Foot.

¹ *Calendar of State Papers: Domestic*—1611-18.

² A summary of the orders then directed to the Constables will give a good idea of the constitution and discipline of the Militia—at least theoretically—at that time:—Arms checked at the last muster were to be amended or renewed by a certain day: soldiers enrolled not to

the same time, according to Walter Yonge, sergeants were sent for from the Netherlands and distributed over England, six being sent into Devonshire, "who exercised and disciplined the captains and officers of every company and band in martial discipline."¹

In the northern division of Devonshire there were,

remove their dwelling without license : the trained to be in readiness to march upon an hour's warning : all able-bodied untrained men from 21 to 60 to be enrolled : every hundred "trayners" to have three baggage waggons : beacons to be diligently watched by discreet and sufficient men, two by day and three by night : for every hundred trayners, ten able men within the Hundred to serve for pioneers to be provided with—

12 "pike axes."
12 spades.
12 shovels.
6 iron bars.
6 axes.
6 hatchets.

2 tent saws.
4 hand saws.
12 small baskets to carry earth.
12 bills to cut wood.
10 "berriers" (augurs) of several sizes.

It was to be signified to the best sort of men within the Hundred to provide themselves with arms for their particular use. Trained soldiers were to be warned to keep in readiness such horses as they had for more speedily conveying themselves, their arms and other necessities, and to provide themselves with knapsacks and provisions of victual for ten days. That for every musketeer there be provided 3 lbs. of powder, 3 lbs. of lead to make bullets, and 3 lbs. of match, to be raised by tything rates within the Hundred, and being provided to keep it safe. To appoint the chief innkeeper of every market town in the Hundred to be always furnished and provided with post-horses for his Majesty's service, to be employed at the King's price, viz., twopence each mile. Inquiry to be made what spare arms are in the Hundred besides those belonging to the trained bands, and in whose hands they are. The next and last clause seems to provide for scouting parties :—That in case of any advertisement, either by firing the beacons or otherwise, of the approach of the enemy, such strong and sufficient watchers both of Horse and Foot to be set and continued in all fit places as shall be necessary. (*Notes and Queries*, 2nd Series, iii. 27).

¹ *Diary*, Camden Society, 1848, p. 90.

according to Westcote, in 1633, two regiments of Militia—the First commanded by Colonel Sir Lewis Pollard, Bart., and the Second by Colonel John Acland. These regiments were “well armed with pike and musket.” There were also three cornets of Horse in the county, under the command of Sir Ferdinando Gorges, Governor of Plymouth.¹

The military organization, of which we thus obtain a glimpse, became a few years later the basis of the army which was raised for the war with the Scots, and, as will be seen, the North Devon parishes contributed their quota.

The towns were always jealous of the right to maintain their own military forces. These were raised in the same way, were sustained by a martial rate on the inhabitants, and went by the name of Trained Bands. Exemptions from service were apparently rare.² All through the sixteenth century there are entries in the Municipal Records of Barnstaple of disbursements for this purpose—muster-roll expenses, payments for cleaning the “town harness,” for making the butts, for bows and sheaves of arrows, for swords, daggers, morris-pikes and halberts, and for the defensive armour of the period—tallets, corslets, and almaynryvets. These items are typical; they commonly occur in parish and municipal accounts, and are only quoted here to show the ordinary details connected with the

¹ *View of Devonshire in 1630*, p. 72.

² Raleigh Clapham of Barnstaple, apothecary, was exempted from personal service, not on account of his profession, but because of “the infirmity of his body” (*Records, Supplementary*, No. 4).

local military administration. In 1585, a contingent of town soldiers was sent from Barnstaple to join the expedition of the Earl of Leicester to the Netherlands, which sailed from Harwich in December of that year. The pages of Motley¹ tell us to what a miserable state of beggary the unfortunate men pressed for this undertaking, intended as an oblique thrust at Spain, already concocting an invasion of England, were reduced. Wyot records that in 1587 the town soldiers were mustered "with a shewe of their arms and artillery"² in the parish church, by the heroic Sir Richard Grenville and other justices.³

In the year 1614, in the peaceful reign of James I., there was a special call—it is not easy to see upon what occasion—on the martial resources of the town, and orders from the Privy Council came for increased strictness to be observed at the musters of the trained band. Items in the Corporation accounts of that year show that one Mr. Lawday was paid "to ride to Plymouth, and towards his charges there to learn the feats of arms, £2." Gunpowder (two cwt.) was laid in at a cost of £8 3s. 5d. The armoury was overhauled and its contents furbished up. William Scamp, the cutler, for making new heads to the pikes, and cleaning the town armour, and for girdles and hangers for the same, was paid £1 3s. 3d. Dinners for the soldiers cost the considerable sum in those days of £8 4s.⁴

¹ *United Netherlands*, ch. vii.

² Which then meant bows and arrows, arquebusses, and other small arms.

³ "Diary," Chanter's *Literary History of Barnstaple*, p. 93.

⁴ *Records*, No. lxi.

It appears that in the same year in which the attention of the Government was directed to the state of the Militia in the counties, as already noticed, the Mayor and Aldermen of Barnstaple, in the excess of their loyalty or patriotism, petitioned the Privy Council for, and obtained permission to increase the number of their trained band from sixty-five to one hundred men; they were also empowered to elect a captain and officers of their own, "to assess arms upon the most sufficientest inhabitants," and to muster within their own precincts. A few years later this military enthusiasm cooled—at least in some quarters—as the burden of the martial rate became severely felt by the inhabitants of the town, and falling upon them, as it did, simultaneously with the new and grievous exaction of ship-money. The Mayor and his brethren, in a petition to the Privy Council in 1634, complain that divers of the inhabitants "being of a froward disposition and averse from all good order do refuse not only to provide arms but to contribute towards the charge of so good and laudable a work, pretending several reasons for exemption."¹

As the arms and equipment of the trained soldiers of this period were the same as those with which the levies for the Civil War were furnished, at least during its earlier days, it may be useful in anticipation of what is to follow to see what they were like.

There were two descriptions of foot-soldier —

¹ *Records*, No. lv.

pikemen and musketeers. The pikeman wore a corslet, which was light body-armour defending the breast and back, and tasses, which are otherwise described as almaynrivets, so called because rivetted after the German fashion, presumably an improved construction, covering the lower part of the body and thighs. A morion, or open iron helmet, turned up at the edges and peaked in front, protected the head. It seems that it was not always that he could get these. His weapon, the pike, was from twelve to eighteen feet in length, a (proverbially) plain ash staff with a narrow spear-head of iron or steel. He was also armed with a short straight sword. There was as much glorification of the pike in those days, as there was of the "British bayonet" (its successor) in the annals of the Peninsular War. The defensive armour, which in almost all contemporary parish accounts is mentioned as "harness," as well as the offensive weapons, pikes and muskets, was kept at the expense of the parish for the use of the quota of soldiers which the parish was bound to provide. Each farmhouse appears to have been also "charged" with its proportion of arms or armour or both: *e.g.*, Coombepyne Farm is "charged with one corslet."¹ Queen Elizabeth, in her Instructions to the Lord-Lieutenant of Devon in 1574, orders not only that it shall be seen that armour is provided, but, with minute consideration, that care shall be taken that it fits the wearer.² It is doubtful if there was anything like uniformity in the

¹ *Trevelyan Papers*, Camden Society, 1872, pt. iii. 191.

² *Archæologia*, xxxv. 353.

equipment of men drawn as they were from various parishes and provided with such armour as the local resources happened to be able to supply. The "harness" was doubtless of various ages and patterns, and in many cases had done duty at musters in the time of the grandfathers of the present wearers.

The original musketeer was dressed in a leather doublet, the cost of which was as much as 14s. of the money of that time. His trunk hose were of his native kersey. The Parliamentary regiments raised in London wore coats of distinguishing colours: thus we meet with red-coats, green-coats, and blue-coats—colours adopted from those of their regiments which in turn were derived generally from the livery of their respective colonels. The common badge of the Parliamentarians was an orange-coloured sash, and that of the Royalists a crimson one. The musketeer wore on his head what he could get; but as the war went on the iron pot headpiece seems to have been universally used. His musket was the match-lock, fired by the lighted end of a twisted "match" or cord, prepared with saltpetre, brought down by a spring on the priming, the other end of the cord being held in the left hand. Match occurs as a considerable item in the stores of ammunition. When it ran short, as on one occasion at the defence of Marlborough, houses were ransacked for bed-cords to serve as a substitute. As the musket was too heavy and clumsy to be fired from the shoulder, the musketeer carried a "rest," like an attenuated crutch, which was stuck into the ground, and supported

the piece while being fired. The musketeer wore a bandoleer, or bandelara, as the word was sometimes written, a shoulder belt on which hung a row of little wooden cases, containing each a charge of gunpowder; these were called "shoots of powder." The cartridge was not yet generally in use. The bandoleer as an accoutrement has been recently revived. As barrels of gunpowder were carried to the field, it is to be inferred that each musketeer filled his bandoleer from the open barrel; and every man seems to have carried his bullet-mould for casting his own bullets. At the right side of the musketeer hung a bag of bullets. The first bullet for use was carried in the mouth; hence the honourable article of capitulation which allows the soldier of a surrendered garrison to march out "bullet in mouth." On the same side hung his "touch-box," containing lighted tinder.

All representations of the military formations of the period show the pikemen in a solid square, like the Greek phalanx, the men so close together that probably, as in that classical precedent, the pikes of even the fifth rank when levelled extended three feet beyond the front. The musketeers were placed in advance and on the flanks of the pikemen. The sergeants carried halberts. In the records of Barnstaple is this item of expenditure, in 1639-40: "Paid to George Soucet for 6 halberts, which he bought at Bristol for the town, £2 9s. od." ¹

The horse-soldiers were also of two descriptions—troopers and dragooners, or dragoons. The former,

¹ *Records*, No. lxi.

men who could provide their own horses, or who were the substitutes of others who did not personally serve, were generally of the class from which the Yeomanry cavalry regiments are now recruited. Every landed proprietor was "set" to furnish his quota according to his supposed estate. The trooper was armed with sword and pistols. It is stated by military authors that, until the more impetuous charges of Prince Rupert's cavalry led to another fashion, the ordinary attack of horse-soldiers consisted in the opposing squadrons trotting up to each other and commencing the conflict by an affair of pistols; after discharging which and throwing them at the heads of the enemy (which they generally did) they fell to with their swords, if one or the other did not break and scatter.¹

The other description of horse-soldiers was the dragoon. The derivation of the name has not been determined, but it is believed to have been from a fire-arm called a dragon, with which he was originally armed. The dragoons were mounted on country horses, and were armed with a short fire-arm, which they dismounted to discharge. They were, in fact, what are now called mounted infantry.

¹ We notoriously exaggerate in imagination the *size* of the ancient Romans. The same may be said with reference to the supposed stalwart troopers of the Civil War. Mr. Charles Greville, in his amusing *Memoirs*, says that when he was at Littlecote House he saw the hall hung round with the armour and buff coats of Colonel Popham's troopers, and states, as a remarkable fact, that they are all so small that no man of ordinary size could wear them; a clear proof (he adds) that the present generation are much bigger than their ancestors of two centuries ago.

A regiment of Horse usually consisted of not more than three or four troops of fifty or sixty men each. A troop of dragooners, however, numbered one hundred men. Officers of the higher grades wore body-armour more or less complete, borrowed doubtless in many cases from halls in which hung the—

“Armoury of the invincible knights of old.” v

It is rare to find a portrait of a military celebrity of the period in which the subject is not represented in armour. The gentleman's buff coat worn by other officers was an expensive affair, but then it lasted a long time. Before the war there was “not a good one to be gotten under £10 [a sum equal to three or four times as much now] ; a very poor one for five or six pounds.”¹ But already the “complete steel” was going out of use. Sir Edmund Verney, in the first campaign against the Scots, writes to his son: “I am resolved to use nothing but back, brest and gauntlett. If I had a pott for the hedd that were pistoll prooffe, it may be I would use it, if it were light ; but my whole helmett will bee of noe us to mee at all.”² A military coat of “French scarlet,” with trimming of eight and a half dozen of buttons and loops, is mentioned as costing £30.

Besides the men of whom the forces constitutionally pressed for the Militia and trained bands were composed, “volunteers” are also frequently mentioned. These, it may be assumed, were mostly

¹ *Trevelyan Papers*, Camden Society, 1872, pt. iii. 194.

² *Verney Papers*, Camden Society, 1853, p. 227.

professional soldiers—old campaigners who, having an eye to pay (which was usually not illiberal), plunder, and—what the great Duke of Wellington believed induced every man to enlist into the British Army in his day—drink, willingly responded to the call of the sergeant. As the war went on, they shifted without compunction from one side to the other as better prospects offered, indifferent to the cause which they served.

The patriots of the Parliaments which met in April and November, 1640, had succeeded, after the struggle which had been going on since the beginning of the century, in redressing most of the abuses of government and, could the Stuarts have been trusted, in safeguarding for the time to come the political liberties of the people. It was the religious question, for the settlement of which not even a compromise could be found, that mainly brought about the Civil War.

The Puritan and the Catholic are always with us. The two parties, or rather schools, of religious thought and sentiment which are represented by these names need no description here. In the perturbed years of the reign of Charles I., immediately preceding the Civil War, each was endeavouring to shackle, if it could not altogether suppress, the other; while both professed attachment and allegiance to the Church of England. The acrimony of a never-ending controversy pervaded both public and private life. Toleration of religious opinion by either party was almost unknown, and its feeble voice was as a voice in the

desert. If it was denounced by the one as soul-destroying, it was stigmatized by the other as a "child of the Devil." Puritanism, however, was in the ascendant; and the sombre literature of Calvinism was as much gloated over in many a 'squire's hall as in the townsman's parlour.

On a review of the state of the religious question at this period, it would seem that the alleged grievances of the Puritan part of the nation were not based upon any essential doctrinal differences, and went no further than what may be summarized as hatred of Popery, objection to prelatical government, and aversion from ceremony and ritual. The Puritan saw behind these forms and symbols ecclesiastical pretensions and doctrines for which he had very hard names indeed. It is common knowledge that the early Puritans in private life were God-fearing, exemplary in their lives and conduct, strict in their religious observances, and grave and austere in their manners. A temperate and judicious historian thus tersely describes them in their public attitude:—"They were anxious for improvement, sometimes fretful for change, but they revered the great principle of an established Church, and did not entertain a thought of separating from its communion. Some of them would have moulded it anew; but few or none of them desired its overthrow."¹ Such, I conceive, were the Church Puritans, whose influence, as we shall presently see, was paramount in the affairs of the municipality of Barnstaple before and

¹ Marsden's *History of the Early Puritans*, 1853, p. 5.

at the beginning of the Civil War. They were Churchmen first and Parliamentarians afterwards.

The influence of the earnest, though extravagant, preaching of the Puritan ministers in fomenting the prevalent temper of the times which—religious in its impulses, but political in its consequences—spread throughout the length and breadth of the land, and led up to the Civil War, has not probably been over-rated. Comparatively, the influence of the printing-press on the formation and growth of public opinion was insignificant. Political news was always first published from the pulpit; and the preacher was never at a loss for the text from the Old Testament to apply to it, in accordance with the Judaical method of illustration then in favour. Some curious light is thrown upon this feature of the times by the Municipal Records of Barnstaple. In the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth itinerant lecturers preached on Sunday afternoons in the parish church, and were paid out of the Corporate funds. Their services were in most instances appraised at what strikes us as a moderate rate. For instance, in 1582-3, there is “—Paid to a preacher by order of the Mayor, 8d.”¹ A course of sermons appears to have been at one time arranged for Fridays throughout the year, probably for the benefit of the country people—Friday being the market-day. For these 12d. a sermon was considered suitable remuneration. It would be wrong, of course, to judge from this of the value of the ministry. Afternoon sermons on Sundays were an innovation of the Puritans,

¹ *Records*, No. lx.

and their peculiar institution, the importance attached to which is astonishing. It was concisely said of this abundant sermonizing, and of the conflicting notes that proceeded from the "drum ecclesiastic" (which is the key to the sarcasm), that Canterbury was preached in the morning and Geneva in the afternoon. One of the last acts of James I. was a direction to the bishops, the effect of which, it was said, was to "cut off half the preaching in England," that is, all afternoon sermons, at one blow.¹ At the same time a very equivocal indulgence was offered to Papists and Puritans—no preacher was to fall into bitter invectives or "undecent" railing speeches against their persons *causelessly or without invitation from the text*. One of the chief complaints invited, or instigated, by the Committee of Parliament on Religion in 1640, was that of the apathy of the bishops with reference to this great craving of the time. A petition from the county of Kent alleges that of the bishops themselves few preach and that but seldom, and that they "doe restraine the painfull preaching of others both for Lectures and Afternoon Sermons on the Sabbath day." Ministers are very freely censured for their shortcomings; one—but he was a curate—seldom preached, and "did preach more syllily than seldom."² In connection with these grievances, the terms applied to the objectionable ministers of the Established Church were sufficiently compre-

¹ Fuller's *Church History*, iii. 321.

² *Proceedings principally in the County of Kent*, Camden Society, 1862.

hensive. They were freely stigmatized as "unpreaching ministers," "non-residencearies," "men-pleasers," and "dumb dogs."

In 1628, John Trynder, vicar of Barnstaple, died. By all accounts he was of a jovial temperament, cared nothing for the local powers, and abused the Aldermen to their faces from his pulpit. If Wyot has handed down his character faithfully, he was a specimen of the "scandalous minister" who so greatly complicated the ecclesiastical difficulties of the time. It is to be feared that Trynder, like a certain Kentish vicar presented to the Committee of Parliament on Religion, was a "common frequenter of taverns," and perhaps, like the Kentish vicar, he added to this another enormity, to wit, that of being "a drinker of healths."¹ The truculency of the Rev. John Trynder may explain the fact that towards the end of his career Benjamin Coxe was formally appointed by the Mayor and Corporation at the otherwise incredibly large stipend for the time of £50 a year for three years, if he continued so long to read a weekly lecture in the church.² Trynder's epitaph contains a touching allusion, perhaps to these incidents of his earthly pilgrimage, in the quotation from the Psalmist, "Many are the troubles of the Righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of All."

The Rev. Martin Blake, B.D., a man of blameless character and a good churchman, who lived through-

¹ *Proceedings principally in the County of Kent*, Camden Society, 1862.

² *Records*, No. xxxiii.

out the Civil War and the Interregnum, and was ejected from his living in Cromwell's time, succeeded as vicar. Two contemporary divines of eminent orthodoxy occasionally occupied the Barnstaple pulpit—the pious and learned John Downe, Rector of Instow, Bishop Jewel's sister's son, and Dr. George Hakewill, Rector of Heanton Punchardon and ultimately Rector of Exeter College, Oxford, the author of the *Apology or Declaration of the Power and Providence of God in the Government of the World*, a work of much repute in its day and frequently reprinted. But the Puritan Lecturer was firmly established and held forth in the afternoon discourse.

Archbishop Laud endeavoured, but ineffectually, to suppress all lecturers and irregular preachers, although the eminent Joseph Hall, at that time Bishop of Exeter, who was no Puritan, gave it as his testimony that those in his diocese were godly men and had done much good. On the other hand, perhaps the worst that has been said of them is that they generally supplanted the incumbents of livings in the affections of their parishioners and gave the greatest growth to nonconformity.¹ With the deterioration of their character as the war went on and their influence increased, their contracted views, their affected sanctimoniousness, their vindictiveness, and, in some instances, their ferocity, we have here nothing to do.

The discontent which brought about the Scotch invasion of 1640 is popularly supposed to have been caused by no greater matter than the attempt of

¹ Fuller's *Church History*, iii. 322.

Charles and Archbishop Laud to impose upon the Scotch national Presbyterian Church the liturgy and canons of the Church of England. Scotch Presbyterianism was amply avenged by imposing itself afterwards for a melancholy period upon the English people. The majority of Englishmen were too much impressed at the time by a sense of their own grievances to feel any interest in the suppression of Scottish rebellion, with which they had, on the contrary, much reason to sympathize. The Puritans openly condemned the impending war with the Scots as impious. It was popularly called the "Bishops' War"—a war on behalf of Prelacy which was supposed to be the cause of half the evils of the times. So reluctant were the English troops to engage in it that some of them mutinied and even murdered their officers on their march. A company of 160 soldiers under the command of Captain Gibson, pressed in North Devon for Sir Thomas Culpeper's regiment, had marched no farther than Wellington, in Somersetshire, when they fell into "an insolent and desperate mutiny," and cruelly murdered Lieutenant Compton Eures (or Evers), one of their officers, because he was a Papist.¹

The House of Commons, in which there was a large leaven of Puritanism, did not let slip the opportunity of fomenting the prevailing intolerance of Popery. Not only did they persistently insinuate

¹ Some particulars of this transaction have survived, and may be of local interest in this place. After dragging the body of their victim "in a barbarous and inhuman manner" through the streets of Wellington, the mutineers disbanded themselves. The following are named

suspicion of the King's fidelity to Protestantism, but held up to odium with less reserve the Queen's notorious attachment to the Roman faith. According to the pernicious custom of the period, a solemn Protestation was ordered to be taken in every parish. This was a vow to maintain and defend, with life, power, and estate, the true Protestant Reformed Religion expressed in the doctrine of the Church of England against all Popery and Popish Innovations within the Realm, &c., as also the Power and Privileges of Parliament, &c. Of course, no one could refuse this test without danger of being suspected as a "recusant." I have before me a copy of the Protestation, as taken in August, 1641, from the form preserved in the Register of the parish of S. Mary Arches, Exeter, to which about eighty signatures, presumably of householders, are appended. The position of the Roman Catholics became pitiable. Under pressure of the alarm of the Puritan Parliament, the King issued in March following a Proclamation for putting in force the laws against Popish recusants. Hitherto the Roman among the ringleaders in the Proclamation issued for their apprehension, July 24, 1640:—

John Moor, Minet Episcopi (Bishop's Nympton).

John Wall, Wittridge (Witheridge).

Edward Clarke, South Molton.

Thomas Clarke, } Swimbridge.

John Parramore, }

William Shapcot, West Anstie.

Bartholomew Tucker, Chittlehampton.

John Tout, } Minet Episcopi.

Toby Tout, }

Edward Lovering, } Landkey.

William Gregory, }

(Rymer's *Fœdera*, ix. pt. iii. 21.)

Catholics had been suffered to pay compositions in lieu of fines for their recusancy. All arms, gunpowder, and other munitions of war in their possession were now to be seized. There were apparently only a few families, of any position, in North Devon who adhered to the old form of faith. Of these the Chichesters of Arlington, the Courtenays of Molland, and the Risdons of Parkham were the best known. The houses of Mr. Chichester and Mr. Courtenay were searched, apparently not without resistance, as many persons are stated to have been wounded, and much "substantial armour" was found in them.¹

The Rev. John Watkins, in his *Essay towards a History of Bideford*, published in 1792, sarcastically attributed the Parliamentary feeling in the North Devon towns to the "great credit and influence which certain Puritan preachers had obtained in these towns. Some of them were men of the most respectable families in these parts, and of considerable fortunes; and all this, added to the affectation of peculiar sanctity, and an ardency of zeal in the cause of pure doctrine and worship, made them looked up to, by the multitude, as infallible prophets, who could not possibly lead them wrong." ² Political reasons, perhaps, mainly influenced the commercial and trading communities, which were predominant in the Devonshire towns, to take the side of the Parliament; but there is no

¹ Letter quoted in Oliver's *Collections Illustrating the History of the Catholic Religion in Cornwall, Devon, &c.*, 1857, p. 20.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 38.

doubt that the religious question was much more keenly taken up by these communities than by the less excitable rural population. When the sharp reaction against Puritanism took place after the Restoration, the Justices of Devon, then engaged in harrying the Dissenters, and issuing an order for putting in force the Acts of Parliament against them, took the opportunity of publicly stigmatizing the corporations and boroughs in the county as "Nests and Seminaries of faction and disloyalty," and of denouncing the Nonconformists, who resided in some of the boroughs, for "taking the same seditious methods they did in the late rebellion of drawing the people from their allegiance and duty."¹

That there was a Royalist section of the inhabitants of Barnstaple we have reason to know; but undoubtedly an overwhelming majority took up the cause of the Parliament from the first; and this determination was sufficiently reflected in the Corporation, whose influence, not to say authority, was moreover of considerable weight in guiding the popular opinion. It has been insinuated, I do not know with how much justification, that the civic potentates were flattered by the prospect of increasing their power under the Parliamentary régime. Notwithstanding such detractions, it is no inconsistency to say that, in the whole course of Barnstaple history, there are not more eminent names than those to be found in the ruling majority of the Corporation of that period. It is only necessary to

¹ Hamilton's *Quarter Sessions from Queen Elizabeth to Queen Anne*, 1878, p. 184.

mention those of Gilbert Paige, Richard Beaple, Pentecost Doddridge (brother of the Judge), Richard Ferris, Thomas Horwood, to show that, not only the discreetest and wealthiest, but also the most benevolent and philanthropic of its merchants held the interests of the town in their keeping.

It is not apparent that there were any special causes for the early plunge which the Corporation of Barnstaple took into the vortex of political strife. If we endeavoured to seek any such we should probably be disappointed. The leading inhabitants of the town were prosperous if not affluent, and had, at least, no burdens which others did not equally bear. Their religious sensibilities had not been outraged. They were not even on sympathetic or amiable terms with their neighbours, and, therefore, the influence of example cannot be taken into account. But the sense of political oppression was seething throughout England; some subtle influence pervaded such comparatively isolated communities, and there was no newspaper rhetoric as in these days to act as its safety-valve.

No estimate of the state of affairs in Barnstaple, immediately before and during the period of the Civil War, would be complete without taking into account the extraordinary personal influence, for good or for evil, which was exercised by GEORGE PEARD. He was a descendant of an old local family, several of whom had been mayors of the town in the sixteenth century. He was a son of John

Peard—probably the same who was admitted a student of the Inner Temple, in 1582. There were two contemporary John Peards—the other was a goldsmith, *b.* 1573, *d.* 1632, whose grave-stone is in the south aisle of the church. George Peard, who is described as one of the learned counsel of the town, in 1614, and who was one of the Members of Parliament for the borough, in the 39th of Elizabeth, and again in the first Parliament of James I., was probably his uncle. It was this George Peard who, in 1606, gave to the Corporation one of the handsome silver-gilt hanaps still in the possession of the Town Council.

George Peard, the younger, was born in 1594. He also was bred to the law, and was a member of the Middle Temple.¹ He is described as “a lawyer of good repute in his profession.” He was first returned as Member for Barnstaple, to what is called the “Short” Parliament, in April, 1640, with Thomas Mathews, merchant, for his colleague; and afterwards to the “Long” Parliament, which met in November of the same year, with Richard Ferris, merchant. He took part in the debates of that memorable assembly, spoke against ship-money, and was Chairman of a Committee of the whole House of Commons upon the Bill of Attainder of the Earl of Strafford. According to Sir Symonds D'Ewes, he was moderate and sober in his views,

¹ xxiii^o die Junii 1613. Mr. Georgius Peard filius et heres apparens Johannis Peard de Barnestable in Comitatu Devon generosus admissus est in Societatem Medii Templi specialiter' (Records of the Middle Temple).

but a vehement speaker. On one occasion, when D'Ewes was much interrupted in his speech, Mr. Peard, he remarks in his Diary, "reproved the noisy members." The same gossiping authority tells us that Peard spoke "exceedingly well" in the debate which followed the Lord Keeper Finch's defence. Peard, it would seem, was not without a sense of humour. On this occasion, referring to the refusal of Finch, at the command of the King, to put, as Speaker, the question from the chair, he remarked that if the Speaker were to be silent, the House would be dumb, and that it was like blowing up the House without gunpowder—alluding, of course, to the Gunpowder Plot. In one of the earliest of the Journals of the Commons, in this Parliament, his name is to be found associated, on a committee of sixteen, with those of Hampden, Pym, St. John, Selden, Hollis, and Cromwell. From Sir John Northcote's notes we obtain another glimpse of his manner. Referring in the House to the new Canons—extreme in their intolerance—promoted by the Bishops in Convocation, and alluding to the famous "et cætera" oath, which was imposed upon the clergy, binding them to attempt no alteration "in the government of the Church by bishops, deans, archdeacons, &c.,"¹ Mr. Peard exclaimed—"The

¹ "Rubbish of Babel, for who will not say,
Tongues were confounded in &c.?
Who swears &c. swears more Oaths at once
Than Cerberus out of his triple Sconce:
Who views it well, with the same eye beholds
The old half Serpent in his numerous folds."

(*Rump Songs*, i. 122.)

whole book of Canons is a bait and a hook; the whole book the bait, the oath the hook.”¹ His strong Puritan leaning is apparent in another note of a motion made by him on the 3rd of Dec., 1640: “That order go from the House to the Sessions at Newgate for quick proceeding against Recusants [Roman Catholics], that they may be convicted next Sessions: Ordered.”² In a great debate on the conduct of the judges in pronouncing for the legality of ship-money, the House, suspecting that they had been “solicited” by the King’s supporters, Mr. Peard, it is noted, moved that Jones (one of them), who was then lying *in extremis* be sent to; whereupon Sir P. Stapylton moved that Mr. Peard be sent to Judge Jones.³ He was a firm supporter of Mr. Pym, and was put forward to move the printing of the Grand Remonstrance, as an appeal to the nation, in December, 1641, although on that occasion the motion was not carried. In the following February, Mr. Peard was on a committee with Mr. Selden (the learned John Selden) and others, to “peruse the statutes in force against priests and Jesuits.” In June, 1642, when the Members of the House of Commons volunteered their names as contributors of “Horse, Money and Plate,” for the defence of the Parliament, there occurs in the list the name of Mr. Peard, who “will bring in an hundred pownds and expect noe interest.” He also, following Sir Symonds D’Ewes’s example, offered to give £50 yearly as long as the Irish war lasted—considered a great public service.

¹ *Sir John Northcote’s Note-Book*, by A. H. A. Hamilton, p. 10.

² *Ibid.*, p. 26.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

Peard at that time was Deputy-Recorder of Barnstaple. Subsequently, in May, 1643, it appears from a formal entry of that date in the Remembrance Book, that he held the office of Recorder,¹ the appointment to which, although apparently in the nomination of the Crown,² was certainly assumed on this occasion by the Corporation.

When war was seen to be inevitable, Peard, like Cromwell, Hampden, and other active Members of the Commons, went down among his own constituents to prepare them for the struggle.

Of Richard Ferris, Peard's colleague in the Long Parliament, we shall find but little mention. He was a man of a less fervid temperament and of less decided views; probably one of those who would willingly have found some middle way in the prevailing difficulties. Although he freely contributed to the support of the Parliamentary cause in "Horse, Money and Plate," and certainly took part in the measures for the defence of Barnstaple in the Parliamentary interest, yet he was afterwards "disabled," that is, voted out of the House of Commons—a consequence of a suspected leaning to the Royalist side. He is therefore classed, but I think mistakenly, as a Cavalier.³

Ferris was a local benefactor, and left an endow-

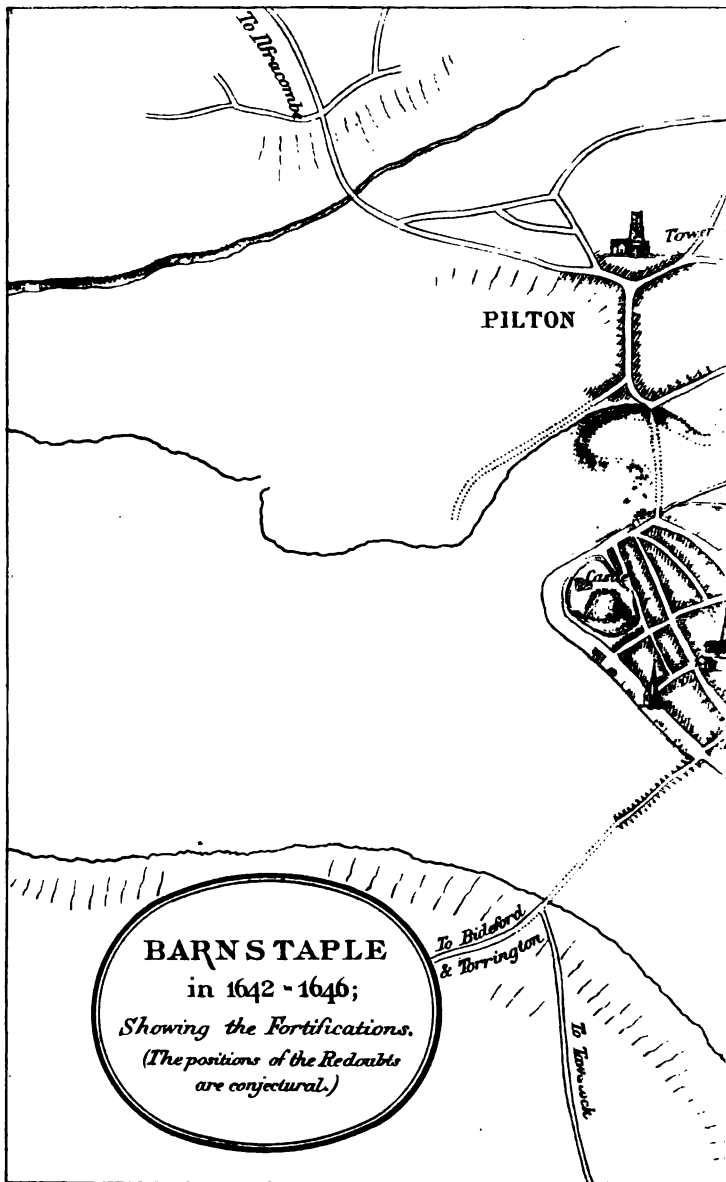
¹ *Records, Supplementary*, No. 5.

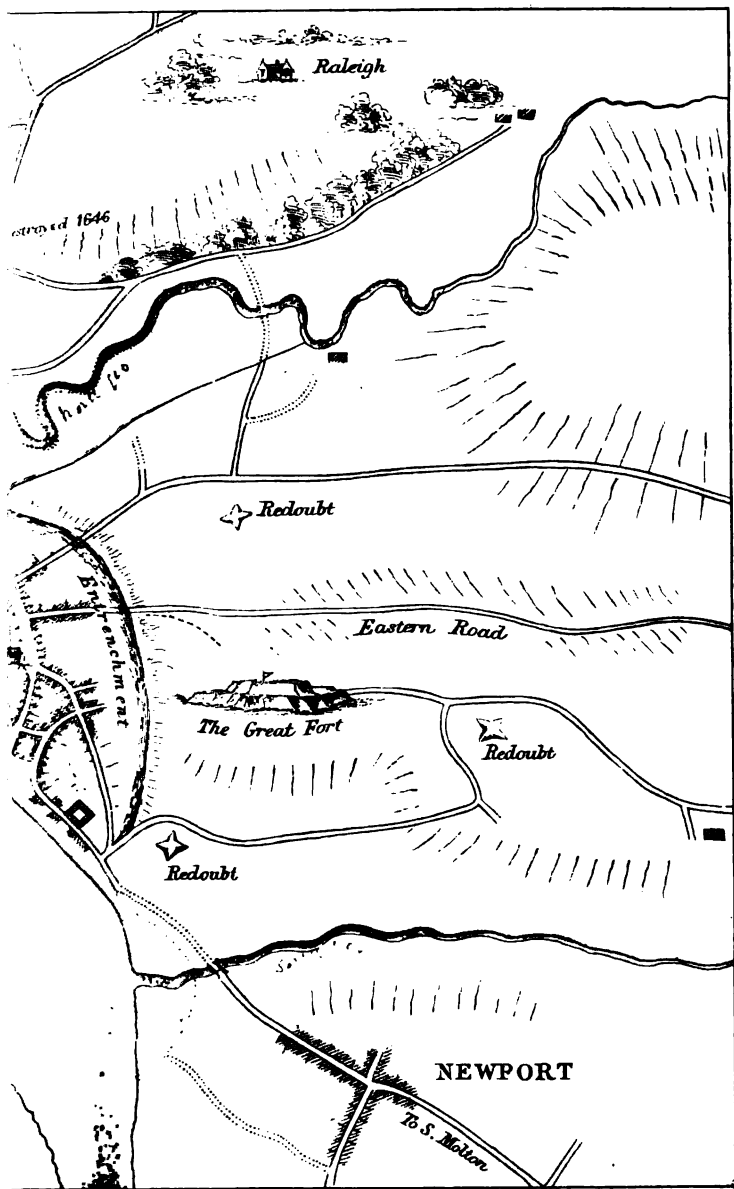
² See Gribble's *Memorials*, p. 293. The right was vested in the Corporation by the first charter of James I., in 1610. Mr. Chanter seems to imply that this was one of the changes in the revising charter of the following year (*Records*, No. xxxvij.).

³ So in a list in Sanford's *Studies and Illustrations of the Great Rebellion*, p. 500, where the name is erroneously spelt "Ferrers."

ment to the Grammar School, which is still enjoyed. He died in 1649. An inscription in verse, in the turgid style of the period, on the sumptuous monument to his memory in the south aisle of the parish church, alludes to him as a friend of the poor and of education—"to advance arts above our monster-teeming ignorance"—a prudent magistrate, and a zealous and devout frequenter of God's house.











PART I.

*FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CIVIL WAR
TO THE SURRENDER OF BARNSTAPLE
TO PRINCE MAURICE.*

August, 1642—September 2, 1643.

THE famous Parliament which met in November, 1640, and became historically known as the Long Parliament, had a mandate—to use a modern political term—to rectify abuses in the State and the Church which had been revived or introduced under the autocratic government of King Charles during the previous eleven years. The House of Commons, which assumed the chief burden of this work, was not composed, as is sometimes supposed, of a band of low fanatics. Looking down the roll, there will be seen, alternating with the names of great merchants and able lawyers, those of baronets, knights, and esquires, the representatives of some of the oldest families of the kingdom, whose names are still familiar to us. On the whole, it was a fair

reflection of the respectability, the intellect, the learning, and the wealth of England.

This Parliament, although it drifted into the commission of arbitrary acts and acts of cruelty, which seem more strange to us, but which were the survival of a still ruder age, had reversed many encroachments on the rights of the people. It had punished the insolent abuse of power by condemning the Earl of Strafford. It had warned the upholders of sacerdotalism, in the person of Archbishop Laud, that they would not be tolerated. It had contended with a despotically-disposed sovereign, surrounded by a selfish and venal Court, for the civil and religious liberties of the English people; and not without considerable success. Indeed, in the view of many of the moderate politicians, who, upon a reaction of loyalty to the Crown, seceded to the King's party, too large a concession had been made to the popular demand.

If the King had not already shown, by repeated acts of duplicity, that no trust could be placed in him, a reconciliation and a reasonable settlement might have been, at this period, possible, if only it had been a question of political differences. Unfortunately, the religious question, a legacy of the Reformation, which had arrived at "a place of potency and sway o' the State," intensified those differences, and, as on more than one occasion afterwards, barred the road to peace. In the beginning of January, 1642, the King precipitated a crisis by outraging the dignity and independence of Parliament, in his attempt personally to seize,

in the House of Commons itself, the five Members whom he had accused of treasonable speech in debate.

From this time there were distrust and resentment on both sides, leading by inevitable steps to violence and wrong. In those days, it should be remembered, political failure did not mean merely a relegation to the cold shade of the Opposition, but fine, imprisonment, and possibly Tower Hill or the gallows. The Commons threw themselves upon the City of London for protection. The King, mortified and bewildered, left Westminster, never to return to it but to pass to the scaffold.

The failure of this *coup d'état*, attempted on the 4th of January, 1642, naturally strengthened the hands of the extreme party in Parliament, against which it had been obviously directed, and super-added, as a consequence, the dangerous gift of popular applause. The denounced Members, after having been ostentatiously protected by the City, were brought back triumphantly to Westminster. The King admitted a mistake which had passed beyond redemption, and waived any further proceedings.

Before the end of the month the House of Commons sprung a mine upon the King by demanding that the Tower of London, the other principal forts of the kingdom, and the Militia should be put into the hands of such persons as Parliament might confide in, and as should be recommended to his Majesty by both Houses of Parliament.

Queen Henrietta Maria, the most mischievous of

the King's advisers, went to Holland, taking with her the Crown jewels—for what purpose there could be but one ominous suggestion. Charles withdrew in a hesitating, objectless manner towards York, where he was soon joined by his more intimate adherents, by a majority of the Lords, and by many of the moderate section of the Commons—those who “had withstood the prerogative in its exorbitance as they now sustained it in its decline,”¹ and instinctively apprehended danger to the liberties of the country as much from the violent and extreme party in Parliament as from the inordinate pretensions of the Court.

The King was followed by a “Declaration” of the Parliament, in which, to some of the older grievances, others of later origin—the absence of the sovereign being one—were added. This, with the King's answer, was duly ordered by his Majesty to be printed and read in all churches and chapels. Again they were ordered by the Houses of Parliament to be printed and read, with the addition of their “Replication.” Thus the “distempers” and “distractions” of the times were carried into every parish in England, and the whole country was in a ferment.

The remarkable State papers, teeming with crimination and recrimination, just referred to, have been compared for their temper, reasoning, and argumentative power, to the marked disadvantage of those emanating from the Parliament. These, in so far as they were public manifestoes, ac-

¹ Hallam's *Constitutional History*, vol. i. p. 558.

quired their greater influence from their unscrupulous appeal to the popular prejudices and terrors of the time. A generation whose fear and detestation of Popery was beyond all that can now be conceived—who had been mentally fed on *Martyrologies*, and to whom the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition were still a living tale—were implicitly informed, on the high authority of Parliament, that their sovereign was in treaty with the Pope for bringing Spanish and French armies to England for the purpose of suppressing the Parliament and subverting the Protestant religion. Propositions were then transmitted to the King, containing demands so aggressive, if not offensive, that no answer, other than an angry protest, was possible or perhaps expected.

In the earlier months of the year 1642 the popular sympathy with Parliament spread far and wide. From almost every county petitions were addressed to the two Houses, many of them from counties around London being brought up by thousands of freeholders marshalled in procession. That from Devonshire, signed by above two thousand persons (a proportionately small number), and presented by Sir George Chudleigh, of whom more hereafter, was one of the earliest. These petitions were all of nearly the same tenour—they prayed that the Bishops and Popish lords might be expelled from the House of Lords, that evil counsellors might be removed from his Majesty, that there might be “a happy reformation in Religion,” that privilege of Parliament might be maintained, and that the kingdom might be put

in a posture of defence. A little later, the magistrates of Devonshire, in Quarter Sessions assembled, pleaded impartially with both King and Parliament for peace and reconciliation, in addresses remarkable for their epigrammatic force.¹

Parliament had already, in February, assumed the appointment of new Lord-Lieutenants of counties, supplanting those opposed, or suspected of being opposed, to their interests. William Russell, Earl of Bedford, who had succeeded to the title the year before, and had been Lord-Lieutenant jointly with his father, was retained for Devon and for the county of the city of Exeter.

The ordering and settling, as it was called, of the Militia was the burning question of the next few weeks—a question violently discussed in a host of pamphlets. Whatever may have been the ostensible pretext of the Commons in pressing for the King's consent to the whole of the military force of the kingdom (to which it amounted) being placed in their hands, there can be no doubt, of course, that the power which the control of this force would give was the real object in view. To safeguard the kingdom from fears and dangers and from the mischievous designs of those who were enemies to its peace were the professed motives. The King at first yielded with a reservation, then prevaricated, and ultimately refused to recognize the "Ordinance" which the Houses had precipitately prepared. On the 1st of March, Parliament announced to the King their

¹ See Hamilton's *Quarter Sessions from Queen Elizabeth to Queen Anne*, pp. 122-5.

resolution to dispose of the Militia by their own authority.

The King himself, at this time, says Lord Clarendon, "and they who best knew the state of his affairs, seemed to be without any thought of making war and to hope that the Parliament would at last incline to some accommodation."¹

During this exciting period the tension which existed in public feeling gave rise, as usual in such public crises, to the most absurd rumours—the already notorious Colonel Lunsford, Lieutenant of the Tower, had a scheme prepared for blowing up the city of London and for setting Westminster and the Parliament house on fire—the Irish papists were coming over to combine with their English co-religionists in a general massacre of the Protestants—there was a design for laying a mine of powder under the Thames to cause the river to drown the city—40,000 Danes were to be landed at Hull to serve the King—the French king had sixty sail of men-of-war at sea, hovering between the coast of Devonshire and Brittany, manned by many thousands of land soldiers!

Towards the end of April, the King made an unsuccessful attempt to gain possession of Hull and of the magazine of arms there, the most important at that time in the kingdom. It is usually considered to have been the first overt act of the war; but, this being admitted, casuists have not decided *who* was the

¹ *History of the Rebellion and Civil War*, p. 287a. (The edition from which I quote is the single volume one of 1839, which is stated to contain the genuine text of this important work.)

breaker of the peace—the King who attempted, as of right, to seize the place, or Sir John Hotham who, by the authority of Parliament, resisted the attempt.

Soon after this, the trained bands of London were mustered by order of Parliament and ostentatiously paraded; and the Lord-Lieutenants of counties and their deputies were directed to take possession of all magazines in their chief towns, and to provide all *well-affected* persons with such arms as they might require for the service of their country. The King's retort was a Proclamation, issued on the 27th of May, forbidding the trained bands of the kingdom to rise, march, muster, &c., by virtue of any order or ordinance of Parliament.

In this way the nation was drawn into the calamities of CIVIL WAR. Whoever began it, says Oldmixon, with probably strict truth, "the Parliament resolved to have all grievances, spiritual and temporal, redressed and security against the like for the future. The Court was as resolute against both. Each side was sharpened by reproaches, and *there were not men of temper sufficient to be of weight in more moderate counsels.*"¹

From this necessarily brief and imperfect review of the state of public affairs immediately before the outbreak of the Civil War, I shall now turn to the smaller arena, the limited scope of the ensuing notices, in which the unhappy differences that rended the heart of the nation will be found reflected.

On the 1st of March, 1642, unsatisfied by the

¹ *Clarendon and Whitlock compar'd*, 1727, p. 104.

King's answer to their petition demanding the control of the Militia, the Commons passed, among other resolutions, the following one:—"That such parts of this kingdom as have put themselves into a posture of defence against the common danger have done nothing but what is justifiable and is approved by the House."¹ This was probably intended to be read more as a prospective than as a retrospective declaration, and Lord Clarendon remarks that Parliament was glad "to put an obligation upon all Corporations by showing they thought them capable of the greatest trusts." It may have been, and probably was, the foregoing resolution, communicated to the Mayor of Barnstaple, which suggested the measures that I proceed to review. At all events, almost before the Parliament had finally committed itself to war, before a single Royalist soldier had entered Devonshire, and with a precipitancy which was noticed with wonder at the time, the Corporation of Barnstaple, in an evil hour, decided upon fortifying their town.

Barnstaple was favourably situated for military defence; its earliest known history had been more or less the history of a fortress. Some of its ancient artificial works and, to a great extent, its natural position were still available against the methods of attack common in the seventeenth century. The town was protected in front by the broad tidal river. On its northern flank the deeply-cut channel of a tributary to the Taw, called the North Yeo, and on the

¹ May's *History of the Parliament of England which began November 3, 1640*, &c., Ed. 1854, Appendix, p. 470.

other flank a smaller stream which at one time bore, but no longer bears, the name of the South Yeo, were impediments, if duly utilized, to an enemy's progress. In larger volume probably than now, these rivers took their serpentine courses through valleys of flat, alluvial, and marshy land, periodically overflowed by the tides, to the Taw. Between the two valleys the ground rose gradually from the almost dead level which formed the site of the town into a double ridge, ultimately attaining an elevation of two or three hundred feet, and then joining the medley of hills which characterizes this picturesque part of North Devon.

In the extreme angle formed by the junction of the North Yeo with the Taw were, as there still are, the remains of a *burh*¹—an artificial, truncated, conical mound surrounded by the moat from which its materials were originally taken. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* relates that the Danes in the year 894 “besieged a fortress in Devonshire by the North Sea.” The fortress is not identifiable, and the result of the raid has not been recorded. The object of the expedition was presumably (for on this point history also speaks with an uncertain voice) to avenge the defeat at Kenwith, near the mouth of the Taw, which Hubba the Dane had suffered sixteen years before. But, in any case, there are no traces remaining of a stronghold answering to the description in the *Chronicle*, except that of the burh at Barnstaple. It is probable that the burh was constructed by the Saxon possessors of Barnstaple, in

¹ My authority for the use of this word is Mr. Geo. T. Clark, *Medieval Military Architecture in England*. 1884.

the interval between these two attacks, *i.e.*, between 878 and 894. It seems obvious that it was a defence against an enemy approaching from the sea.

Under the protection of the burh, which was originally only a stockaded fort,¹ the Saxon borough grew up. William the Conqueror gave the burh with its appurtenances, which had been held in demesne by Edward the Confessor, and traditionally by Æthelstan before him, to Judhael, a powerful Norman, who on the Saxon mound built the circular shell-keep of the period—a structure, the peculiar form of which was necessitated by the artificial character of the ground upon which it stood. At the same time the ditch was probably deepened, and means adopted for letting into it the tidal water from the river when desired. Outside the ditch on the north, and under the protection of the fortress, was the castle water-mill which still, after grinding for probably a thousand years, performs its customary functions.

The Castle of Barnstaple, as a fortress, probably developed in the usual manner of a mediæval stronghold, and as became the caput of an honour or barony. The early Norman building was limited to the shell-keep, surmounting the more ancient mound. The castle from which Henry de Tracey, in the reign of Stephen, sallied out with his knights in all their bravery and, on behalf of the king, fought with William de Mohun, of the Tor of Dunster, who supported the cause of the Empress Matilda, stood on the base-court west of the keep. The town

¹ A burh so fortified was described in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* as "getimbrade" (Parker, *Domestic Architecture*, &c., vol. i. p. xviii, note).

was already walled in the Norman period—certainly early in the reign of Henry I. (1100–35)¹—more than probably at the time of the Domesday survey (1086); how much earlier is an interesting question which cannot here be pursued. Further on in mediæval times the whole town became the fortress. Outside the South Gate, which was the most important entrance, lay the open space called the bailey (*e.g.*, Old Bailey, London; Old Bayle, York; Bailey, Oxford), between the walls and the barbican. The precise position of the barbican is now unknown, the name only having survived. This open space called, at some time, the Bailey-meadow, the name now corrupted into Belle-meadow, was covered in the seventeenth century by suburban buildings.

Scarcely anything of the town walls remained in Leland's time. In the year 1642, the whole of the mediæval defences, with the exception of the north and west gateways, having disappeared, Barnstaple, in a military sense, was an open town.

A "Remembrance Book"² of the Barnstaple Corporation contains, under the date of August 8, 1642, the earliest discoverable notice of the proceedings upon the resolution of fortifying the town to which

¹ The walls and gates are mentioned in the deed of gift, by Judhael to the Priory of Barnstaple (Dugdale's *Monasticon*).

² The original (not now to be found) appears to have been a transcript made by Mr. John Rosier, who became town-clerk in 1661, from loose minutes of the proceedings of the Corporation taken at the time. There is a MS. volume of extracts, obviously from this transcript, in the Collection of the late Lieutenant-Colonel William Harding, now in the Athenæum at Barnstaple. The first entry in this volume is that of the 12th of July, 1628, the last, that of the 6th of October, 1663; but there are several large gaps between these dates. Gribble (*Memorials*

I have referred. The limited ideas which it betrays of the impending demands upon the Corporation, consequent upon their adherence to the Parliamentary causes, are slightly amusing. It was agreed that, in this emergency, the Mayor for the ensuing year should allow the sum of ten pounds out of his stipend of thirty pounds, and "spare so much cost att his feast when he is to be sworn;" but to mitigate a self-sacrifice so touching in a civic sense, "he is to invite only those of the Common Counsell" to the banquet. This sum was "to be employed towards the fortifications of this towne." As troubles thickened or threatened to do so, the night watch was more strictly organized. A score of the most substantial townsmen volunteered to serve their turns. Others, unable probably to serve in person, undertook to furnish each a musket; and a dozen new muskets were ordered to be bought "att the charge of the towne with snappanges,¹ to be imployed and used at watches and in other service for the towne." At the same time (Aug. 27) a committee of nine was appointed to "p'ceed on to finish and p'fect the fortificacons." Mr., otherwise Captain, Penfound Curry² was engaged by the Cor-
of Barnstaple), quoting many of the same passages which were, he says, "from a source of unquestionable authenticity" (p. 443, *note*), premises, very strangely, that they are "given without abbreviation or alteration." But the Harding MS. is more full and evidently more literal, and I have adopted it in preference to Gribble's version wherever there is any variation.

¹ *Snaphaunces*—a newly invented spring fire-lock which had been recently introduced from Holland.

² He had been, in 1628, captain of one of the "letters of marque," and therefore, like more distinguished warriors of those times, was soldier and sailor indifferently. (*Records*, No. lxvii.)

poration at a salary of £20 a year to drill the Trained Band and also the volunteers, and to order the watch.

There is not much to be gathered from the local records which survive relating to the progress of the work to which the Corporation were now committed. At the outset, it is probable that the construction of breastworks for the defence of the more vulnerable entrances to the town was all that was considered necessary.

Meanwhile the Ordinance of Parliament by which the control of the Militia was assumed had been published, and Members of the Commons had been sent down to their respective counties to co-operate with the Deputy-Lieutenants for the purpose of raising and organizing the levies for that constitutional force. "The most confused months," to quote the language of Carlyle, "England ever saw. In every shire, in every parish; in courthouses, ale-houses, churches, markets, wheresoever men were gathered together, England with sorrowful confusion in every fibre, is tearing itself into hostile halves, to carry on the voting by pike and bullet henceforth."¹ In Devonshire the most active of these agents of the Parliament were Sir George Chudleigh,² Sir John

¹ *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, 1857, i. 93.

² Sir George Chudleigh of Ashton, baronet; of an ancient Devonshire family. He was son of Captain John Chudleigh, a seaman-adventurer of Queen Elizabeth's days and friend of John Davis, who essaying the circumnavigation of the world died in the Straits of Magellan, having lived long enough, Prince says, to exhaust a great estate. Sir George Chudleigh was married to a sister of William Strode, one of the five Members impeached by Charles I.

Northcote,¹ Sir Samuel Rolle,² and Sir Nicholas Martyn.³ They were afterwards formally proclaimed traitors by the King.

In the second week of July, the Commons resolved to raise 10,000 men at once ; Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, was appointed General of the forces to be so raised, and William Russell, Earl of Bedford, General of the Horse. At the same time, the Court being at Beverley, yet another Declaration, in the form of a petition, was presented by both Houses of Parliament to the King. It was intended to be conciliatory. The voluminous reply of the King was haughty and repellant, and in the replication of the

¹ Sir John Northcote, of Hayne, in the parish of Newton St. Cyres, knight and baronet ; M.P. for Ashburton in the Long Parliament. He was subsequently M.P. for Barnstaple, in the place of Sir John Chichester, in the parliament of Charles II., which met in 1661 (Browne Willis's *Notitia Parliamentaria*, ii. 328). But Mr. A. H. A. Hamilton (*Sir John Northcote's Note-Book*, p. 127) supposes that Sir John was *not* a Member of this parliament ; although he is at a loss to account for his having taken notes during its session. The subject of this note was ancestor of the present Earl of Iddesleigh.

² Sir Samuel Rolle (or Rolls as at that time it was indifferently spelt), of Heanton Sachville, knight ; the head of a younger branch of Rolle of Stevenstone. One of the Members for the county of Devon in the Long Parliament. Some literary moles of the last century imagined that they had discovered in him the original of the character of Sir Hudibras in Butler's immortal satire—on no better grounds, it seems, than that he was a Puritan Colonel and a stout gentleman, and that he had once lodged in the same house with Butler. (See Isaac D'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature*, ed. 1849, ii. 546.)

³ Sir Nicholas Martyn, of Oxtou, knight ; after the expulsion of Sir E. Seymour, one of the Members for the county of Devon in the Long Parliament. His daughter was married to Mr. Turner, a woollen draper in Watling Street, London, where the five Members were concealed when King Charles followed them into the City. (Somaster MSS.)

Parliament, war was, in Lord Clarendon's view, "now denounced by their express words against his Majesty as it had been long before in their actions; and both parties seemed to give over all thoughts of further treaties and overtures."¹ On the 2nd of August, Parliament issued a declaration of its reasons for taking up arms; on the 9th the King proclaimed Essex a traitor; and a few days later the ceremony of setting up the royal standard was performed with mediæval solemnity at Nottingham. Towards the end of the month there was a final parley through the agency of the amiable Lord Falkland, who, if his counsel could have availed, would assuredly have brought about peace even at that hour. It is stated by Lord Clarendon that, at this time, the King's hopes of raising an army seeming so desperate that "he was privately advised by those whom he trusted as much as any and those whose affections were as entire to him as any men's [meaning, no doubt, himself as one of them] to give all other thoughts over, and instantly to make all imaginable haste to London and to appear in the Parliament-house before they had any expectation of him. And they conceived there would be more likelihood for him to prevail that way than by any army he was like to raise."² To the student of "the history of Events which have not happened" this passage offers a fertile field for speculation.

Parliament, having been proclaimed traitors by the King, retaliated by publishing a Declaration to the kingdom that the arms which they had been forced

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 299 a.

² *Ibid.* p. 313 a.

to take up, or should be forced to take up, for the preservation of the Parliament, religion, and the laws and liberties of the kingdom, should not be laid down until the delinquents who had assisted his Majesty in an unnatural war against his kingdom should be brought to the justice of Parliament ; and that the charges sustained by the commonwealth should be recovered out of the estates of the said delinquents and of the malignant and disaffected party.

Already, early in August, the Parliamentary Committee of Devonshire were busy with the organization of the local Militia. The earliest document that I have found in evidence of their proceedings is an order to Captain Robert Bennet,¹ whose name will recur in these pages in connection with the military affairs of Barnstaple, to assemble his company at Great Torrington. This was of course only one of several orders issued at the same time to the officers selected to raise and muster the trained men of the different Hundreds. Captain Bennet had received his first commission from Lord Roberts, the new Lord-Lieutenant of Cornwall nominated by Parliament. The following is a copy of the order from the original now before me :—

SR

The Company assigned to yo^r commaund is to be mustered at Great Torrington upon the 22nd day of August

¹ He was a country gentleman, of Hexworthy, Lawhitton, near Launceston ; described as a rigid Puritan. His only personal association with North Devon, so far as I am aware, was derived from his marriage with the heiress of Mules, of Helmston, Bishop's Tawton, near Barnstaple.

by nine of the clocke in the morninge yo^r presence then
& there is expected wth such officers, Drumes & colors as you
have or can for the tyme get, whereof wee praye you not
to faile as you tender his Mat^r service and the good of yo^r
Countrie, wee rest

Yo^r assured ffreinds and
service

August 12th
1642.

PET. PRIDEAUX
GEO. CHUDLEIGH
SAM. ROLLE
FRAN. DRAKE

To o^r verie loveinge
freind Robert Bennett
Esq^r these.

(Endorsed)

The deputy Lieutenants order to me from Exiter for the
ordering of the Militia at Torrington.

August 12. 1642.¹

The King's Commission of Array, which was to all
intents and purposes the same thing as the Parlia-
ment's Ordinance of Militia under another name and
authority, was being put in force in several counties
at this time. In opposition to it the House of Lords
had issued an Order, in July, to the Sheriffs of
counties, Mayors of corporate towns, and others, to
prohibit its publication.

Henry Bouchier, Earl of Bath, like many other
peers, had put loyalty before patriotism. Desert-
ing his place in Parliament, he had gone to the

¹ Phillipps MSS. (Thirlestaine House, Cheltenham). Bennet Cor-
respondence, &c., No. 11,015, art. 27.

King at York and engaged to raise a troop of fifty Horse in the royal cause. He was now coming into Devonshire, where he was thought to be "of notable power and interest,"¹ with the King's Commission of Array in his pocket. He was expected at Exeter, where the authorities were prepared to receive him as a friend or an enemy as the case might be; but he entered the city "in a peaceful and civil way" and without causing the popular explosion that seemed rather to have been expected. Lord Clarendon insinuates that the Earl was not a very earnest Royalist, that "he neither had nor ever meant to do the King the least service," and that he brought upon himself the enmity of the Parliament (as will be seen hereafter), because out of the "morosity of his own nature" he had, in the House, "expressed himself not of their mind."² Another of the Earl's personal peculiarities is incidentally mentioned by the same historian—he "had no excellent or graceful pronunciation."³ He was, in fact, more a man of letters than a politician. Lloyd refers to him as a "great scholar."⁴ As Sir Henry Bourchier he had been the friend and correspondent of Mr. Camden, Sir Robert Cotton, and Archbishop Ussher.

The Earl of Bath appears as a prominent figure in North Devon in the earlier part of the period which these notices will cover and until he was suppressed, in a rather summary fashion, by the Parliament, William Bourchier the third earl, who died in 1623, had been intimately associated with Barnstaple; on

¹ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 291 a. ² *Ibid.*, p. 316 b.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 102 b.

⁴ *Memoires, &c., of the Royalists*, p. 650.

more than one occasion he had the nomination of one of its Members in Parliament; and for some time held the honorary office of Recorder, then usually conferred upon some neighbouring county magnate. Edward the fourth earl, who died in 1636, was a man of literary and antiquarian tastes, the patron of Westcote, the Devonshire topographer and genealogist. He was succeeded by his cousin Henry the fifth earl—the earl of the Civil War. Tawstock, the ancient seat of the family, stands on the left bank of the river Taw, two miles above the town of Barnstaple, in a hollow lying between two gently swelling hills, facing the east. The old house, built in the reign of Elizabeth, was burnt down in the year 1786, all but the gate-house, bearing the date 1574, which still stands. In front of the house, which with its range of gables faced the river and the open downs of Coddon hill on the opposite side of the valley, there were by successive gradations a terrace-walk, a bowling green, and a pleasaunce bordered by trimly clipped hedges and formal alleys. On the slope which fell away gradually to the river, midway, embowered in trees, stood the parish church of Tawstock, now well known for its picturesque interior and sumptuous monuments of the Bouchier family.

The event of the first coming of the new Earl into the county, five years before, had been of sufficient moment to call forth the hospitality of the Corporation of Barnstaple, who, after the manner of the time, were thus wont to propitiate their powerful neighbours. A minute of the municipal body in July, 1637, records the resolution, that the Earl, with such

other knights and gentlemen as he shall think fit to accompany him, shall be provided with "a convenient dynner for their entertainment att the charge of the Towne." The immediate good will of the town is shown, however, in a gift :—

Paid for a present to the new Earl of Bath
to give him his Welcome into the Country £6 12s. od.¹

With old-fashioned courtesy the Mayoress, accompanied by her fellow townswomen, must needs pay court to the new Countess, and so, mounted on pillions, they rode to Tawstock. The cost of the expedition is duly entered in the town accounts, and it was not excessive :—

vii^s x^d p^d when Mrs. Maiorisse and the rest of the Townswomen rode to Tawstocke to visitt the Countis of Bath and for horse meate and other expenses there.²

The "entertainment" was not given until later, when the following item of expenditure relating to it occurs :—

1639-40. Paid for an Entertainment to the Earl of Bath and his Countess and other gentry by the consent of the Aldermen and other Capital Burgesses £10.³

On the 13th of August, the Earl of Bath issued his mandate to the High Sheriff of the county, the Justices of the Peace, Mayors, Bailiffs, &c., and

¹ *Records*, No. lxii.

² From the "Great Book" of Receiver's Accounts.

³ *Records*, No lxii.

officers of Trained Bands. It recited the King's commission to himself under the Great Seal, dated the 19th of July, 18 Car. I., and others of the Commons, to arm, array, train, and muster, &c., and the King's declaration that he intended nothing to the damage of his subjects. He required all the inhabitants of the County of Devon to yield no obedience to any Commission for training and mustering military forces not derived from his Majesty's authority, and required all his Majesty's officers and ministers to publish this in all market towns and other public places.¹ This was the publication of the King's Commission of Array.

The manifesto created a great deal of excitement throughout the county. The justices at the Assizes, then being held at Exeter, complained to Sir Robert Foster, the judge, that the Commission of Array was "a thing of extreme grievance and terror to them all." And the constables of the Hundreds petitioned the judge that the counter declaration and order of Parliament condemning all Commissions of Array as illegal might be openly read in Court, that the petitioners and the rest of the county might know the law thereon and how accordingly to shape their opinion. Sir Robert Foster, a Royalist, was not, however, to be entrapped, and, although pressed, discreetly declined to give any opinion as to the legality or illegality of the Commission of Array.²

¹ De la Warr MSS. *Fourth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission*, 1874, p. 308.

² *Calendar of State Papers : Domestic*—1641-43, pp. 369, 371, 375.

Not long after the Earl of Bath's arrival at Tawstock he received from the House of Lords (that is, from the anti-royalist section of it which still sat) a missive requiring his attendance on the 22nd of August. To which he replied that he had given his attendance, as of right, with as much diligence and affection to the public as his poor ability could express; but having "received many interruptions by scorns, menaces, and affronts from the people inhabiting about London and Westminster," &c., he desired their Lordships to excuse his absence until he might have some confidence of enjoying that honour and safety which heretofore he had not had.¹ Whereupon it was ordered by the House "That the Earl of Bath should be sent for as a Delinquent. And, upon further information that he had great store of powder in his house in Devonshire, it was ordered, That search should be made for such powder or stores, and the same kept safe till the pleasure of the House should be further known."² Meanwhile, the Earl was planning, in conjunction with his neighbours, Lord Chichester³ of Eggesford, Sir Hugh Pollard⁴ of King's Nympton, Mr. Bas-

¹ Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, ii. p. 1455.

² *Ibid.* A Delinquent was an offender against the Parliament in the first degree; a Malignant in the next and worse.

³ Edward, Viscount Chichester, of Carrickfergus, in the Peerage of Ireland. He was a younger son of Sir John Chichester, of Raleigh, near Barnstaple, and married the heiress of John Copleston, of Eggesford, Esquire. "I do not find that he took any further part during the war.

⁴ Sir Hugh Pollard, Baronet. He had succeeded his father, Sir Lewis Pollard, the first baronet, in November, 1641. A Member of Parliament in 1640, but having been implicated in the "Army Plot"—

sett¹ of Heanton Court, Mr. Gifford² of Brightley, and other Royalist gentlemen of North Devon, to put in force the Commission of Array.

According to Judge Blackstone, there was no doubt whatever of the illegality of the assumption by the Parliament of the control of the Militia. It was the opinion of the learned John Selden, an authority certainly not inferior, that the King's Commission of Array was equally contrary to law. The latter proceeding was founded upon an obsolete statute of the reign of Henry IV. Its purpose, originally, had been to raise a military force to resist invasion. The Commission had been attempted to be put in force in North Devon for the Scotch War in 1640. That with which the Earl of Bath had been armed seems to have been a special one. Soon afterwards a more general one was given to the Marquess of Hertford (dated at York, August 2) extending over

a conspiracy for bringing up to London the remains of the army originally sent against the Scotch, either to overawe Parliament or to rescue the Earl of Strafford—was committed to the Gatehouse, by order of Parliament, in June, 1641, upon suspicion of high treason, and in the following December was expelled the House. He accompanied the Earl of Bath from York.

¹ Afterwards Colonel Arthur Bassett, of Heanton Court, one of Prince's *Worthies*. He was one of the magistrates imposed upon Barnstaple by letters patent under the Great Seal in 1640 (*Records*, No. xxxix.), an unusual exercise of the royal prerogative. He survived the Restoration, and died at Heanton Punchardon, in the church of which parish there is a monument to his memory.

² Afterwards Colonel John Gifford, of Brightley, in the parish of Chittlehampton. Prince, who places him also in his gallery of Worthies of Devon, says that for the part which he took in the Civil War he was a great sufferer—"was decimated, sequestered, and imprisoned." He was another of the exceptional magistrates imposed upon Barnstaple. (*See* previous note.)

all the Western counties. This was read in the House of Commons on the 24th of August, and ordered to be forthwith printed and published, presumably as a trump-card against the King. The document, as one of our Constitutional antiquities, is of some interest, but I can only afford space for an abstract of it, and that must be relegated to a foot-note.¹

South Molton, situated a dozen miles eastward of Barnstaple, like other small country towns in Devonshire, has probably changed its general features but

¹ Whereas great Forces were being raised by the two Houses of Parliament without the royal consent, &c. The King has found it necessary to raise and levy Forces for the defence of the Protestant Religion, his person, the two Houses of Parliament, the Laws of the Land, the Liberty and Property of the Subject, and Privileges of Parliament. The Marquess to be Lieutenant-General of the Forces to be raised under this Commission. Power given to him in case of any Invasion, Insurrection, and Rebellion, &c., to raise and levy Forces, as well of Trained bands as others within certain counties (of which Devonshire is one). Commissioners of Array, Sheriffs, and Lieutenants to send such numbers of subjects, apt and meet for the Wars, armed and arrayed to such places as directed, &c. To try, array, and put in readiness the persons so raised, levied, or assembled, &c., and every of them after their abilities, degrees, and faculties, well and sufficiently to cause to be armed and weaponed, and to take the musters of them, &c. And also the same, so arrayed, tried and armed, as well men of Arms as other Horsemen, Archers, and Footmen of all kinds of degrees, meet and apt for the Wars, to conduct and lead as well against all and singular Enemies, Rebels, and Traitors, &c., and the said Enemies, &c., to invade, repress, and, in case of opposition or resistance, to slay, kill, and put to execution of death by all ways or means according to his good discretion. The Commission then goes on to provide for the government of the Forces—for the appointment of officers—to tender the royal pardon to all such traitors and rebels as shall submit—to command all forts and castles to be fortified—to summon all Lieutenants, Deputy-Lieutenants, Justices of the Peace, Mayors, Sheriffs, Bailiffs, Constables, &c., to aid and assist.

little since the middle of the seventeenth century. Somewhat resembling a Spanish town in plan, its principal buildings, among which are of course the town hall and the church, face each other across a quadrangular *plaza*. A market cross appears to have formerly stood in the middle of the square. This outline will help to make more intelligible the graphic details of the incident presently to be described. From the district around South Molton, the centre of an agricultural population reputedly rough in character, had been drawn the company of Militia which, in the year 1640, mutinied and murdered one of its officers. However accustomed they may have been to be impressed for the Militia, there was not likely to be any desire on the part of the eligible men of the district to be subjected to a similar exaction from a novel authority which they would, of course, suspect to be papistical, and, on any ground, think should be stoutly resisted. A letter "sent to a worthy gentleman in London," dated from South Molton, the 15th of September, 1642, printed in a contemporary tract¹ in my possession, gives the amusing account of an eye-witness of the attempt of the Earl of Bath and his party to enforce the Commission of Array at South Molton:—

According to my bounden duty I cannot chuse but acquaint your worship with the newes at *Southmoulton*, I my selfe being present at it.

On Saturday last the *Earl of Bath* sent one of his ser-

¹ *A Declaration made by the right Honourable the Earle of Bath, one of his Majesties Commissioners of Array, to the whole Country of Devonshire, &c., Septemb. 29 [1642].* London: Printed for John Wright.

vants unto the Maior of the Towne to know whether he should have a peaceable entrance into his Town the Tuesday following, for he was minded to come there, to meet some Gentlemen upon some occasions; the Maior answered the messenger, that if his intent were for peace, he should come, after better consideration, which the Maior had, he was blamed by some of his friends, for that he had not taken respite to give his answer, but that advice came too late.

The Tuesday [Sept. 13] being the day appoynted, there came the Earle of *Bath*, my Lord *Chichester*, *Baronet Pollard*, Sir *Popham Southcot*,¹ Sir *Ralph Sidenham*,² Master *Basset*, Master *John Acland*,³ Master *John Gifford*, Captaine *Newcond*,⁴ with their followers, and diverse others which I cannot name. A Banquet being provided at *Henry Hearders* house the Inne-keeper, where the Earle sent store of Venison, and his owne Cooke for to dresse it, the common

¹ Sir Popham Southcot, of Mohuns Ottery, in East Devon, which came to him from Sir Peter Carew; also of Indiho, Bovey Tracey, South Devon. He was a grandson of Sir William Pole, the antiquary.

² Sir Ralph Sydenham, of Youlston, near Barnstaple (which he held in right of his wife), was a younger son of Sir John Sydenham of Brimpton, Somerset. He married, about the year 1628, Mary, the widow of Sir Robert Chichester of Raleigh and mother of Sir John Chichester, the first baronet. He was a Member of the Long Parliament, went with the King to York, and was formally expelled the House of Commons on the 29th of September, 1642, for his complicity in publishing the Array. He escaped to France, was fined by Parliament £600 for his delinquency, and after the Restoration was made Master of the Charter House by Charles II. Aubrey says that he gave Monk on his coming to London the hint of the good opportunity that God had put into his hands (*Letters and Lives*, ii. 453).

³ John Acland, Esq., of Columb John, a Colonel of the Devon Militia, ancestor of the present baronet of Killerton. He fortified his house against the Parliamentary forces, was one of the leaders of the Royalists in Devonshire, and suffered much in person and property for his loyalty.

⁴ Not identifiable; but probably John Newcourt of Pickwell, in the parish of Georgeham, Esq. His name does not again appear, and he died in 1645.

sort of the Towne fell in a great rage with the Maior and his company, for giving licence that they should enter, and swor that if they did attempt any thing there, or read their Commission of Array, they would beate them all downe and kill them, if they were all hanged for it; and thereupon betooke themselves to Armes, both men, women, and children, about the Crosse in the Market place. I doe verrily beleeeve they were in number at least 1000, some with Musquets loaden, some with Halberts and blacke Bills, some with Clubs, some with Pikes, some with dunge Evells, some with great Poles, one I saw which had beat the calke of a Sive, and beat him out right, and set him into a long staffe, the women had filled all the steps of the crosse with great stones and got up and sate on them, swearing if they did come there they would braine them. One thing which is worth the noting, a woman which is a Butcher's wife, came running with her lapfull of Rams-hornes for to throw at them. Some of the Gentlemen were comming towards the Crosse, it was thought to publish the Array, presently the people gave a shoute, and did cry, *they be come*, at which they were all ready to stand against them, the Gentlemen seeing that, betooke themselves every one to house, and after that not one of them nor their servants, durst show themselves in the street; it is thought of many, that if the Towne had not risen against them, they would not so soone have departed. Surely whatsoever collor they put upon it, their intent was ill, for their men gave very dangerous speeches, but God is able with his smalest creatures to daunt the hearts of Kings, as with Lice and Frogs and such like: so amongst this crew there were both men and women with Clubs and Staves, which doe daily beg from doore to doore; and when the Earl rod forth of Town, they did throw stones after him and his men. I shall desire your Worships to excuse my boldnesse in writing so large; but if you had seene it, you would have thought this Relation

to be too little. Thus with my humble service unto you and my young Master, I commend you both with the whole Family unto the divine protection, and ever rest.

[*There is no signature*
appended.]

South-moulton the 15 of
September, 1642.

A story told by Westcote (*View of Devonshire in 1630*, p. 291) of the manners and customs of the inhabitants of Newland, a village not very far from the scene of the foregoing transaction, renders the account of the method adopted by the viragoes of South Molton to express their feelings quite credible.

After the failure of this attempt to put the Commission of Array in force in North Devon, the Earl of Bath, with the view, it may be inferred, of allaying the popular excitement which he had raised, issued a short "Declaration" of his motives, as follows:—

As there are disturbances in some part of this Kingdome, so I understand this County of *Devon*, in many places to be falsly possessed of some arbitrary and Tirannicall government pretended [*i.e.* intended] to be set up by the King, and put in practice (among others by my selfe) Wherefore out of my great affection to you and my Country, being now immediately ready to receive the blessed Sacrament, I doe solemnly in the presence of Almighty God professe and declare that I have undertaken nothing contrary to the Lawes of this Kingdome, nor preiudiciall or hurtfull to any that shall observe it: and I doe further professe that I have no authority neither will I take the value of sixpence from any man, but to my utmost power to protect you all, that every one may enioy their owne.¹

¹ *A Declaration made by the right Honourable the Earle of Bath, &c.*

This political manifesto was perhaps intentionally ambiguous. An "Answer" to it immediately appeared, which repeated the argument running through a hundred pamphlets at that time, that the Commission of Array was an arbitrary interference with the existing Militia, of which Parliament had (properly, it was alleged), assumed the control. Admitting the sixpence: How, it was sarcastically asked by the anonymous author, about the power to take the unwilling man's body and lodge it in prison? Both Declaration and Answer were printed together, after the fashion of the time, in the tract above-mentioned.

A diurnal of the 1st of October, quoting intelligence brought to the House of Commons, reports some circumstances of local interest at about this time: the Earl of Bath "is of certaine at his house at Tauestocke neere Barnstaple and hath about him with the least 500 Foot to guard his person: and Sir Raph Sidenham his chief agent hath as many more at his Manor House of Moulton [Youlston], sometimes Rawley, and at other times at Bewley [not identified] and that Sir Beevil Greneville hath seconded their designs Insomuch that for the North of that County there is not any which stands for the Earle of Bath but Sir Bevill and Sir Raph Sidenham."¹ It appears, from other

¹ King's Pamphlets (otherwise, Thomason Collection), British Museum, large 4tos, vol. iii. The diurnals, news-sheets or news-books, under various titles, were the precursors of the modern newspapers. The diurnal appeared weekly with the news and comments arranged under each day's date—whence probably the name. It was roughly printed on a sheet of bad paper folded to the size and shape of a scrimped quarto.

sources of information, that most of the Royalist gentry of North Devon, among whom was Sir John Chichester, of Hall, a territorial neighbour of Lord Bath's, disapproved of these proceedings. The "Array-men," as they were called, were looked upon, not without reason, as the first instigators of a breach of the peace.

Towards the end of September the Earl of Bath, still refusing to attend the House of Lords, was formally voted a Delinquent, and his estates and lands were ordered to be sequestered. On the 28th of the month, Captain Dewett with a troop of Horse, arrested the Earl at Tawstock, by order of Parliament, and he was taken under the charge of the Earl of Pembroke to London. On the 15th of October, he was committed to the Tower, and for twenty weeks remained a prisoner there. We shall find him taking no further part in the affairs of Devonshire. Subsequently, he was with the Court at Oxford, and held the office of Privy Seal to King Charles.

Hitherto, the agents of the Parliament appear to have done little in the way of raising a military force in Devonshire. Shortly before this time, Sir Hugh Pollard had written to the Earl of Bath about their proceedings in a contemptuous tone:—"The Earl of Bedford is now at Taunton in want of men and money; he hath sent to his sure friends Chudleigh, Bampfild and Northcott, for a supply of both, whose oratory cannot get one trained man to move, nor above eight volunteers; and their credits cannot procure him a groat."¹

¹ De la Warr MSS. *Fourth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission*, 1874, p. 308.

The fiasco at South Molton was not encouraging to the Royalists in North Devon. On the other hand, it appears to have quickened the action of the Parliamentary party. Only two days afterwards, that is, on the 15th of September, four companies of Foot, and a troop of Horse, raised and armed at the cost of the Corporation, in conjunction with the municipal trained band, garrisoned Barnstaple in the interest of the Parliament. The fortification of the town had been in the mean time carried forward. Entrenchments and breastworks had been made and redoubts thrown up.¹ There is no mention as yet of any more important work. The defences were therefore far from being so complete as they subsequently were, when the garrison received its first alarm of the approach of the enemy.

At the same time when the Earl of Bath left the Court at York, the Marquess of Hertford, who has been already mentioned—one of the most eminent of the Royalist peers—set out for Somersetshire, for the purpose of furthering the King's cause, taking with him a commission as Lieutenant-General of all his Majesty's forces in the West. He was accompanied by Sir Ralph Hopton, of Somersetshire, an already distinguished soldier who had seen service in the Netherlands, and at the outset of his career had fought in the cause of the Queen of Bohemia, the King's sister, at the famous battle of

¹ Mr. R. N. Worth, the author of the *History of Plymouth*, is of opinion that the breastwork of the contemporary fortifications of Plymouth was merely a low rampart and ditch. A redoubt, as understood at that time, was a small temporary detached work built up of loose stones.

Prague. The Marquess arrived at Wells, and in a "gentle way," according to Lord Clarendon, endeavoured to raise a force for the King by means of the Commission of Array. The Parliamentary party in the county had been, however, beforehand with him, and had got together a considerable body of the Militia. The Marquess was no soldier, and probably thought that the mere display of the royal authority would suffice to quell all opposition. He may be said to have failed in his immediate object; but he collected a troop of Horse, raised by Captain John Digby, a young soldier, second son of the first Earl of Bristol, another raised by Sir Francis Hawley, and about one hundred Foot, all of which had been intended to join the King's army in the North. There were also a troop of Horse, and a small troop of dragoons, which Sir Ralph Hopton raised and armed at his own charge. A skirmish between some of these troopers and the Militia at a place called Martial Elm, was one of the first conflicts of the war, and according to Oldmixon, the first in which a man was slain. The Marquess being outnumbered retired to Sherborne, where with altogether about four hundred soldiers he was watched by a strong force under the Earl of Bedford, who did not push his advantage, and was evidently reluctant to commit himself to hostilities. In the following year the Earl of Bedford went over to the King. Withdrawing from Sherborne, the Earl left a way open for the Marquess, who, finding the Parliament feeling too strong for him in Somersetshire, made his way to the coast at Minehead, in

the second week of September, with the hope, it appears, of seizing Dunster Castle.

Mr. Luttrell, who was for the Parliament, having been warned, strengthened his castle and increased his garrison by one hundred men, and supposing that the Royalists would endeavour to cross over to Wales, to prevent them, caused the rudders to be removed from the vessels in Minehead harbour. The attempt on Dunster Castle was defeated by the resolution of Mrs. Luttrell, who fired upon the Royalists from the castle. Eventually the Marquess and his foot-soldiers escaped in some coal vessels to Wales. Sir Ralph Hopton, Captain Digby, and Sir Francis Hawley, with their troops of Horse, consisting, according to Lord Clarendon, of about one hundred and twenty men, a few fugitives, the same authority remarks, whom the Earl of Bedford did not think worth his further care—an indirect eulogium on this afterwards distinguished Royalist force,—retreated by the eastern skirt of Exmoor, intending “to march into Cornwall, in hope to find that county better prepared for their reception.”¹

The Earl of Bedford, however, inert as he was, made an effort to prevent their escape. Under the erroneous impression that they would make for the coast at some point in North Devon, with the object of crossing over into Wales, he gave instructions to Sergeant-Major Cary for their pursuit:—“Go to Ilfracombe, and search for the fugitives. Apprehend Sir Ralph Sydenham and Sir Hugh Pollard, Bart. If the Earl of Bath assist any, then apprehend

¹ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 316 b.

him."¹ Almost on the same day (Sept. 25), Sir Hugh Pollard, then at King's Nympton, was writing to the Earl of Bath, supposing that the Earl had heard that the Lord Marquess had gone into Wales and that most of his troops had marched into Cornwall.²

A passage in a diurnal of September 30, communicated from Barnstaple, gives the following account of the march of the Royalist flying column :—

From Barnestaple. After the Marquesse Hertfords departure from Mynehead about 400 of those Cavaliers marched from thence to Dulverton, and from thence to Exford in Somerset, about 14 miles from this Towne, and on Saturday night last came to a Village called Chittlehampton, within five miles of Barnestaple, the Inhabitants of which Towne were all in armes expecting them, but they durst not approach thither, having intelligence of their readinesse, the Town being fortified with 16 Peeces of Ordinance, and 500 men in armes. The malignant neighbours assisted these Cavaliers with their servants, to guide and direct them in the Countrey: They were tyred out with their journeyes, and if the Countrey had risen against them might have bin taken all or the most part of them: A servant of the Earle of Bathes, and of Sir Raph Sydenhams conducted them, and the last Sabbath day they marched to Sir Bevyll Greinfelds upon the edge of Cornwall and were by him received and Billeted a day or two.³

It will be seen by any one familiar with the

¹ De la Warr MSS. *Fourth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission*, 1874, p. 304.

² *Ibid.*, p. 308.

³ King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. iii.

country that the geography of the writer of this paragraph is a little at fault, and that the first part of the route taken is not easily understood. Exford and Dulverton are, in fact, on two divergent roads from Minehead, and the former is only half the distance of the latter from the point of departure. Passing through, or by, South Molton, where it does not appear that they were opposed, the troopers evidently made for Umlerleigh bridge, which crosses the Taw seven miles above Barnstaple, after halting for the night of Saturday, Sept. 24, in the village of Chittlehampton. The strength of this body of cavalry was of course much exaggerated by rumour, and it is easy to gather from the slender report that has come down to us that the Barnstaple garrison was in a state of considerable commotion in the anticipation of a possible attack, which however was not attempted. For the present Sir Ralph Hopton and Captain Digby will be left on the Cornish border — soon to come again under notice.

The House of Commons issued warrants on the 6th of October to "certain officers" to raise their companies in the Western parts, and to train and exercise, and upon all occasions to be in readiness. The following letter, printed in the *Trevelyan Papers* of the Camden Society (1872, part iii. p. 228), will show how it was acted upon by the Parliamentary Committee of Devonshire:—

SIR,—That wee may not bee fayling to our owne and countryes preservation, wee invite and intreat you to meet

at Exon, on Friday, the 21 of this instant, by 8 of the clocke in the morning, at the signe of the Beare. You knowe in what a sadd posture the body of the kingdome now stands. You remember that lately 500 horse passed through ours into our neighbor county, whoe now hang over us as a terrible cloude, threatning ruyne, if wee provide not to withstand them. To bee prepared for the worst brings noe disadvantage to any, but strength and confidence to all. To effect this, your advise is desired. It is a tribute you owe to yourself, to your country, to your religion. Be pleased therefore to intreat your neighboring gentry to come with you, that each man may contribute his advise what he thinke fittest for the establishment of our defence and peace, that wee may generally conclude to live and dye together. For this unity pray

Your freinds and servants,

PET. PRIDEAUX.

Exon, 18^o Octobris, 1642.

JOHN POLE.

SAM. ROLLE.

NICH. MARTYN.

JO. BAMPFYLDE.

To our honored friend John Willoughby, Esq^r., at Pehembury, present these.

For his Ma^{ty}s service.

The incursion of the Somersetshire troopers, although more by accident than design, was taken as the first overt act of the war in Devonshire. Sir Peter Prideaux who assumed the leadership of the Parliamentary party in the county at this crisis, although I do not find that he continued long in that prominent position, was of Netherton, Farway, in East Devon. Prince says that he, "by striking in

with the prevailing party of those times, grew up to great wealth and dignity."

The Memoirs of Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers, by Eliot Warburton (London, 1849), is a work to which the present writer is under some obligations, and it has for him the additional interest that it was written in the northernmost corner of Devonshire. The gifted writer slipped, however, into a strange error—an error which has been unfortunately copied elsewhere—when stating (vol. i. p. 432) that about this time (October, 1642), "In the west Sir Ralph Hopton and Sir Bevill Grenvil held Barnstaple . . . for the King." Now, it is equally certain that Sir Ralph never entered the town in that year, that Sir Bevill never held any command in it whatever, and that from the beginning of the troubles until nearly a year after the period mentioned Barnstaple was constantly in the hands of the Parliamentarians.

By the middle of October the Corporation of Barnstaple found themselves in the condition which is best indicated by an extract from a minute in their "Remembrance Book":—"Decimo quinto die Octobris 1642. There hath bene much money disbursed in and about the fortificacions of the Towne and much more likely to be imployed about the defence of the Towne and the Towne is without stocke of money."¹ In other words, the Corporation had committed themselves to an enormous expenditure, and the public chest was already empty. Recourse must be had to loans. Mr. George Peard

¹ Harding MSS.

offers and undertakes to furnish £50, Mr. Richard Beaple £50, Mr. Pentecost Doddridge £50, Mr. Richard Ferris £25; and doubtless many more of the leading men followed their example. As a security for these advances the Mayor and Aldermen gave at once their personal bonds, and with the consent of the Corporation the town lands were to be alienated to raise the money for their redemption.

The military expenditure voluntarily undertaken by, or imposed upon, the town in the four years of the war will be gradually unfolded. An official statement of the highest interest has been fortunately preserved which purports to be an analysis of it. This is called a "Summarie of Disbursements made by the Inhabitants of the Town of Barnstaple, in Plate and Money, for fortifying the said Town and the payment and quartering of Soldiers, under taken upon y^e Hon^{ble} W^m Lenthall's letter (Speaker), faithfully collected from the particulars, which by credible and honest persons, in that behalf entrusted, will appear upon oath." This has been already printed *in extenso*, but with some inaccuracies, in Gribble's *Memorials* (p. 457), and, with more inaccuracies, elsewhere. I shall prefer, therefore, to dissect it as I go on, for the purpose of identifying the items, severally, with the incidents to which they refer and in their chronological order, which, however, is generally adhered to in the statement. I shall refer to it for convenience as the "Summary." Of course, the paper having been of the nature of a claim on the Government of the Commonwealth for reimbursement, for which there was probably but little hope of

any satisfaction being obtained, there may have been some exaggeration in the sums stated to have been disbursed; the fact that most of the items, although not all, are in round numbers may seem in itself suspicious. I may observe, however, that having tested the different statements of the occurrences involved in these items, I have no doubt whatever of their *historical* accuracy. I will add that, having had an opportunity of collating two copies made, apparently at different times and by different hands, from the original document (which appears to have been lost), some unimportant variations in each have been reconciled, and it is presumed a closer approximation to the original text will be found in the extracts which will be here given.

The first item in the Summary is—

Lent in Money and Plate ... £1,191 17s. 9d.¹

This must have been in response to the first demand made by Parliament on the 10th of June, 1642. Contributions of the like kind poured in from all parts of the kingdom.² The value per oz. was to

¹ It should be remembered that the figures, here and elsewhere, must be multiplied by three or four to find the equivalent of the sum in present money.

² Lady Brilliana Harley, in a letter to her son of July 9, from Bramston Castle, Herefordshire, writes: "I have bine so longe in puteing up the plate to send your father [then in London], that I have no time to rwite any more than that I longe to see you. I am confident you are not troubled to see the plate goo this way; for I trust in our gratious God you will have the frute of it." Sir Robert Harley (Lady Brilliana's husband) brought in on this occasion £350 in plate, and engaged for £150 more (*Letters of the Lady Brilliana Harley*, Camden Society, 1854, p. 177).

be allowed for the plate, and 12d. the oz. for the "fashion," *i.e.*, the ornamental work, and 8 per cent. interest; "for which both Houses of Parliament did engage the public faith."

It has been supposed that the Barnstaple corporation plate was sacrificed to the exigencies of the time—either for the local defence or as a contribution to the Parliamentary exchequer. Among the town records there is preserved an inventory in which are included four pieces, of the aggregate weight of 108 ounces, which were handed over from the mayor of the time being to his successor in the year 1633.¹ These, which were apparently the articles of plate in ordinary use at the municipal festivities, have all disappeared. Fortunately, three beautiful silver-gilt hanaps of rich *repoussé* work of the sixteenth century, which had been given to the Corporation many years before the period of the war by Richard Doddridge, merchant (father of the Judge), George Peard, gent. (the elder), and John Penrose, merchant, respectively, were preserved, and are now in possession of the Town Council of the borough.² It may not be too much to assume, although I am alone responsible for the assumption, that among the other sacrifices of the like kind was that of a curious and unique gold chain, worn by at least one of the mayors, Richard Beaple, in 1635-6. All we know of it is from its representation on the sculptured bust of that

¹ *Records*, No. lv. *Ibid. Supplementary*, No. 9.

² There is a precisely similar hanap among the church plate of the parish of Bodmin. It has been described in Sir John Maclean's *History of Trigg Minor*, and is figured in vol. iii. p. 421 of that work.

civic dignitary, which forms part of the elaborate and singularly interesting monument to his memory in one of the chancel aisles of Barnstaple church. The chain, although personal, so to speak, in a marked degree, being composed of the initials of Beaple's name and scallop shells, a charge from his coat-of-arms, all ornamentally treated, was apparently one of official character, and destined to be handed on to his successors. It has disappeared, however, and left not a shadow of a tradition relating to it behind. In a sentimental point of view it might be supposed that a more severe sacrifice was that of the church plate. I am not sure that this was by any means a common case. As to the sacrifice, it was after all, perhaps, a small matter when Oxford had voluntarily given up the priceless plate of the colleges to be melted down for the King's use. As to the sacrilege, it can only be said that that was a word unknown in the Puritan vocabulary. Here, however, is a copy of the document which gives the fact :—

1642, 1st October. Richard Harris of Barnstaple, merchant, did deliver unto me, Mr. Alexander Horwood, appointed commissioner for the plate and monies upon the proposition of Parliament for this town, one hundred and fourteen oz. of plate at 5s. 4d. per oz., which doth amount unto £30 8s. sterling, which was freely sent in the propositions and publique faith the day and year aforesaid.¹

So far as it can be now known with any degree of probability, the principal piece of this collection was a pre-Reformation silver-gilt chalice and cover, weigh-

¹ *Records*, No. liv.

ing 24½ ounces, which had survived the wreck in the last year of the reign of Edward VI.¹; the remainder must have been mostly Elizabethan. The plate went to add to the vast heap of "bags and goblets," as it seems to have impressed itself upon the memory of May the historian, which by the autumn he saw piled up in the Guildhall of London. The value in money, lent on the security of the "Public Faith," on the invitation of Parliament, for the maintenance of horse, horsemen, and arms, for the "preservation of the public peace," it is needless to add was never repaid.

It may be interesting to give here, as a record, the names of the Corporation of Barnstaple at this period (October, 1642). If not an accurate list, it is the nearest approach to it that I have found it possible to make. All, with the exception of the three whose names are printed in italics, appear to have been partisans of the Parliamentary cause.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Mr. William Palmer, Mayor. | |
| 2. Mr. Gilbert Paige, } Alder- | 14. Mr. James Gommon. |
| 3. Mr. Henry Masson, } men. | 15. Mr. Richard Harris. |
| 4. Mr. Richard Beaple. | 16. Mr. Adam Lugg. |
| 5. Mr. Pentecost Doddridge. | 17. Mr. Lewis Downe. |
| 6. Mr. Justinian Westcomb. | 18. Mr. Lewis Palmer. |
| 7. Mr. Richard Ferris (M.P.) | 19. Mr. James Baker. |
| 8. Mr. John Downe. | 20. Mr. Walter Tucker. |
| 9. Mr. William Nottle. | 21. Mr. Charles Peard. |
| 10. Mr. Roger Peard. | 22. Mr. Alexander Horwood. |
| 11. Mr. Anthony Gay. | 23. <i>Mr. Nicholas Cooke.</i> |
| 12. Mr. Thomas Horwood. | 24. <i>Mr. Thomas Dennis.</i> |
| 13. Mr. George Baker. | 25. <i>Mr. Thomas Matthews.</i> |

In October, the Corporation found it expedient to

¹ *Records*, No. xxxiii.

delegate the practical military work to what was called a "Committee of Counsell of Warr," consisting mostly of members of the Corporation, but including professional experts. They are authorized and required "to meete together evy day att the Guildhall by nine of the clocke in the morninge or before, to consult & order what by them shalbe thought fitt to be p'vided & done in & about the fortificâcons & defence of the Towne."¹ The Mayor, reporting in a letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons the proceedings of the Cavaliers under Sir Ralph Hopton, gave an account of the progress of the fortification of the town. Whereupon the House came to a resolution highly flattering to the Corporation, but costly in its consequences to the inhabitants:—

Die Jovis 20^o Octobris 1642. It is Resolved, upon the Question, That this House doth approve of this Action of the Town of Barnestaple, in Fortifying of their Town; and doth take it for an expression of their publick Affections to the Good and Peace of the Commonwealth; and that they shall be saved harmless for their so doing, by both Houses of Parliament: And the House doth desire the Lords Concurrence herein.²

The Lords duly concurred. On the 24th, the Speaker's Letter to the Mayor of Barnstaple, conveying the thanks of the House of Commons, was read and signed by Mr. Speaker; and at the same time Mr. Peard had leave to stay at Barnstaple, for "the service of that Town and Country," and his

¹ Harding MSS.

² *Journals of the House of Commons*, ii. 817.

attendance in the House was dispensed with.¹ It is scarcely necessary to remark that the undertaking of Parliament to indemnify the town was never fulfilled.

This was on the very eve of the day on which the first great battle of the war was fought at Edgehill, in Warwickshire, a spot which with singular dramatic appropriateness is as near as may be the centre of England. Two months had elapsed since the King had set up his standard at Nottingham. His levies of troops had come in at first but slowly. They were armed with difficulty, and only by stripping the local magazines of the Militia. In the mean time the Earl of Essex, Commander-in-chief of the Parliamentary Forces, was advancing to Northampton, with the object of barring the King's approach to London; he was by that time at the head of 14,000 men of all arms. This demonstration compelled the King to remove to Shrewsbury, where his force was increased to eight or ten thousand men, a body of 3,000 Horse being under the command of Prince Rupert, the King's nephew. The King's body-guard was a brilliant troop of noblemen and gentlemen. An advanced party of the Parliamentary Horse came into collision near Worcester with the Prince's troops, and were defeated. The King, being strong enough to take the field, determined to march to London. Essex followed this movement, and reaching the village of Kington, found the royal army on the morning of Sunday, the 23rd of October, drawn out on the slopes

¹ *Journals of the House of Commons*, ii. pp. 821-2.

of Edgehill, on the opposite side of the Vale of the Red Horse, and between his own army and London. The battle which resulted was stubbornly fought, but with no decisive results. Our military critics say that victory was at various times in the grasp of either, but each failed to seize the opportunity which fortune, rather than skill, offered it. At the close of the day—

“Doubtfully it stood;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together,
And choke their art.”

Of the 30,000 men, or thereabouts, who had composed the two armies, between five and six thousand lay dead upon the field.

It was whispered that many of the leading men on each side wished their own party to be not too successful; and their wish was doubtless father to the thought that this one battle would lead to some accommodation and decide the quarrel.

After the troops forming the garrison of Barnstaple had been for about three months within their entrenchments, the first opportunity occurred for a detachment to take the field on active service. Until this time it does not appear that they had been in any way pressed by the Royalists, who, in fact, had not yet gathered any force in North Devon. The incident forms the subject of a contemporary tract, a copy of which was catalogued in Mr. J. Camden Hotten's *Typographical and Genealogical*

Collection of Books, printed about the year 1860. The title is "A *Famous Victory*, obtained by the Inhabitants of the TOWNE of BASTABLE in the COUNTY of SOMMERSET [sic] against *Captaine Pawlet* and 1000 Welch Cavaliers, also Capt. Pawlet's speech to his Souldiers, encouraging them to *plunder the said towne*, likewise an exact discovery of the true Estate of Minyard [Minehead], 1642." Mr. Hotten states in a note that it was written by one Rainton, of Minehead. I regret that I have not been able to consult this tract; a copy of it is entered in the Index to the King's Pamphlets, in the Library of the British Museum, with the place and date of its publication given as "London: Decemb. 20, 1642," but the volume in which it was bound up (small 4tos, No. 87) is now unfortunately missing. On inquiry, I have found that nothing is known of the tract in the Bodleian Library.

The story, so far as we can make anything of it, is, however, not without corroboration. It seems that at this time some Welsh Royalists were giving trouble on the Somersetshire coast: some blockaded Minehead and prevented the supplies of coal from entering the harbour. Others, about five hundred in number, under Captain Paulet, landed there, "invaded" the county, and "constrained the inhabitants to yeeld to any taxation, and to submit themselves servants and slaves to every poore base companion, to save their throats from being cut." This party attacked Dunster Castle, but Mr. Luttrell, being prepared, was able to defeat them and secure the town from plunder. Being thus unsuccessful there,

Captain Paulet went on to Barnstaple with two hundred of his musketeers and forty Horse. I am indebted for these particulars to a paper on "The Siege and Surrender of Dunster Castle, 1645-6," by Mr. Emanuel Green, printed in the *Archæological Journal*, xxxvij, 386. Mr. Green has assigned the incident to a period early in January, 1643, but this may possibly be rather about the date of the ephemeral publication from which he appears to have derived his information. The missing tract, it will be observed, was printed about a fortnight earlier. I have little doubt that both accounts refer to the same event, and that it was this seemingly buccaneering attack that the garrison of Barnstaple successfully repelled.

Stow, the historical seat of the Grenville family, stood on the southward-facing slope of a combe which runs at right angles to the coast, and opens to the Severn Sea, in the extremity of that acute wedge of Cornwall which seems to cut off a considerable portion of West Devon from its natural seaboard. It was then the home of Sir Bevill Grenville—a famous grandson of a still more famous grandsire, the brave seaman and soldier, Sir Richard, of Queen Elizabeth's days, the hero of the immortal fight off the island of Flores. It was the same mediæval fortified manor-house, the description of which, as it appeared in the previous century, will be familiar to the readers of Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* Lord Lansdowne, Sir Bevill's grandson, relates with pardonable family pride that for five hundred years

the Grenvilles had never made any alliance out of the Western Counties, and that there was hardly a gentleman in Cornwall or Devon who was not connected with them by blood. He also describes Stow in Sir Bevill's time as a kind of academy for all the young men of family in the county, who were there educated under the best masters with Sir Bevill's own children.¹

Sir Bevill was the soul of the Royalist cause in Cornwall, and his loyalty went almost beyond the bounds of enthusiasm. Lord Clarendon sums up a description of him in admiration of his bright courage and gentle disposition. It may be doubted, however, whether Sir Bevill did not inherit some of the fierceness of his distinguished ancestor, who, if Linschoten is to be trusted, was of "so hard a complexion" that, in mere "braverie," he would, on occasion, take wine-glasses between his teeth and "crash them in peeces and swallow them downe."² One from his own neighbourhood, politically opposed to him, it is true, at that time wrote—"Sir Bevill Grenville hath been a tyrant, especially to his tenants, threatening to thrust them out of house and home if they will not assist him and his confederates."³ And in one of his own letters he deplores that he "did not march presently to fetch those traitors [the Parliament men] out of

¹ *The Genuine Works . . . of the Right Honourable George Granville, Lord Lansdowne*, London: 1732, ii. 222-229.

² *Voyage of John Huyghen Van Linschoten to the East Indies*, Hakluyt Society, 1885, ii. p. 311.

³ Letter printed in the *Retrospective Review*, xii. 189.

their nest at Launceston, or else fire them in it.”¹ Perhaps, after all, this was only the blood of the old Danish Jarl, Rollo, from whom he claimed descent, asserting itself. He had sat in seven Parliaments, and in earlier life (he was at this time forty-seven years of age) like many others of the now fervent Royalists, had lent himself with patriotic impulses to that other cause, which was more distinctly identified with the liberties of his country. He had been on intimately friendly terms with Sir John Eliot, his fellow West countryman, and when that devoted patriot was imprisoned in the Tower went to London purposely to visit him, but was refused access to the illustrious prisoner. It must be said that Sir Bevill now gallantly devoted himself to the cause which, in his view, was “such as must make all those that die in it little inferior to martyrs.” As early as in the beginning of August he had been taking part with several of the loyalist Cornish gentry to put in force the King’s Commission of Array at Launceston, which was opposed by the Parliamentary Committee, of which Sir Richard Buller, of Shillingham, was the leading member. For this proceeding Sir Bevill had been formally expelled from the House of Commons on the 21st of September.

It was at Stow that Sir Ralph Hopton and his party found both a refuge and a welcome. So little was the meaning of the irruption understood, or so contemptuously was it regarded by the Parlia-

¹ Letter printed in Elot Warburton’s *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, i. p. 420.

mentary Committee, that at the Michaelmas Quarter Sessions¹ then being held, the Committee caused Hopton and his troopers to be presented in ordinary form of law by the Grand Jury as "divers men unknown, who were lately come armed into that county *contra pacem*," &c. The tables were turned, however, when Sir Ralph appeared to the presentment, and quietly produced his commission. The Cornish proclivities, notwithstanding this show of opposition, were as overwhelmingly Royalist as those of Devonshire were Parliamentary. The military resources of Cornwall were proportionately larger than those of Devonshire. In the previous generation there had been more than 6,000 men under arms, of whom, as says Carew, besides those pressed for the Militia, many served as volunteers. Sir Bernard Grenville, father of Sir Bevill, had been colonel of one regiment a thousand strong. Sir Bevill and the Royalist gentry of West Cornwall had, therefore, no difficulty in bringing their influence to bear on the Sheriff, himself a Royalist, to raise the *posse comitatus*, and in a few days by this means about 3,000 Foot of the trained Militia were got together. Sir Ralph Hopton putting himself at the head of these, and accompanied by his small body of Somersetshire cavalry, appeared before Launceston, which the Parliamentary Committee, having Sir Alexander Carew of Anthony and Sir

¹ These Sessions appear to have been held at Bodmin, and, therefore, neither of the alternatives suggested by Messrs. Peter (*History of Launceston and Dunheved*, p. 261, note) can be accepted, especially as they are based on an error as to the time of Sir Ralph Hopton's arrival in Cornwall.

Richard Buller as leaders, had done something to fortify, but which they at once evacuated. Sir George Chudleigh and six troops of Parliamentary Horse lay at Lifton, on the other side of the border, but the Cornish being technically "Sheriff's men," availing themselves of a legitimate right, refused to go beyond the limits of their own county to attack them. Sir Ralph advanced, however, upon Saltash, which was held by Colonel William Ruthen, a Scotch soldier of fortune, and about two hundred Scots, who had put in from stress of weather when on their way from Ireland to France for the service of Louis XIII.¹ On the approach of the Royalists Ruthen retired to Plymouth, at that time being fortified for the Parliament, and the local authorities were glad to make him Governor of the garrison. The Cornish levies appear to have then melted away. The work had to be done again in another form; and an entirely volunteer force of nearly 1,500 Foot was immediately raised by Sir Bevil Grenville and his neighbours, Sir Nicholas Slanning, of Marystow, Mr. Arundell, of Trerice, and Mr. Trevanion, of Carhayes, chiefly among their own tenants and retainers. It was rumoured that these levies were intended to march into North Devon.

¹ Derived from a letter printed in Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, ii. 69. William Ruthen, or Ruthyn as he spelled his own name, is called by Symonds in his *Diary* (Camden Society, 1859), "Lord Ruthin Gray," explained by Symonds's editor to be "Grey de Ruthyn"; but both appear to have been in error. The name of the then baron, Grey de Ruthyn, was Charles Longueville. See Sir H. Nicholas's *Historic Peerage*; Burke's *Extinct Peerage*.

One of the weekly budgets printed in London has the following intelligence at this time :—

From Cornwall it was informed that . . . Sir Bevill Grevill Sir Nicholas Slany Sir Rich Vivian and Master Arundell all Arraymen . . . amongst them have raised about 2,000 men . . . are now bending their Forces against Barnstable in Devonshire, but they have provided themselves well against them by the meanes of Master Perd a Member of the House of Commons and have mounted 16 Peecces of Ordnance to defend the Towne.¹

This was probably only a rumour. At all events it was not the plan of campaign subsequently developed.

In the mean time the trained and untrained levies of Devonshire were being rapidly organized by the local Parliamentary Committee. The first complete regiment of Foot was raised by Mr. John Were, of Halberton.²

The narrative of the proceedings of the Royalists in Cornwall has been given in some detail to prepare us for the remarkable drama of the next six months to which those proceedings materially contributed. While the main armies engaged in the quarrel were pausing, and their leaders were dreaming of accommodations, the two counties of Cornwall and Devon, ranged on opposite sides, were vigorously carrying on the war on their own account. In these

¹ *A Collection of Special Passages, &c.*, London, Nov. 2, 1642, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. iv.

² *The Apologie of Colonell John Were, &c.*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxxxv.

hostilities North Devon was more deeply involved than has been commonly supposed.

Plymouth was being put into the condition of defence for the Parliament which it successfully maintained, against repeated assaults, throughout the war. The citizens of Exeter, also committed to the cause of the Parliament, had as yet done but little beyond repairing their ancient walls, which had survived so many sieges, providing an engineer to advise for the defence of the city in those "tymes of combustion," and putting down the ill-affected among themselves. The King's Proclamation of the 9th of November, of "Grace, Favour, and Pardon" to the inhabitants, had no effect in recovering the allegiance of the city.

Sir Ralph Hopton and Sir Bevill Grenville, with their Cornish forces, passed into Devonshire, with the purpose either of marching to join the King's army, then lying about Reading, or of forming a junction with such Devonshire Royalists as could be got together and making a dash upon Exeter. If we may credit a tract printed in December, 1642, the former project was the one more in favour with the loyal, but truculent, Cornishmen:—

They cry all is their owne, swearing and daming, blaspheming and cursing that they will up to the King in spight of opposition; and for the city of London, they intend there for to keepe their Christmas and make the Citizens wayte upon their trenchers, but for the Roundheads, as they so terme them, they will send them pell mell to their father the devil.¹

¹ *A True Relation of the present Estate of Cornwall*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. lxxxv.

Exeter, however, was to be the first object of attack. On the 18th of November the Cornishmen approached the city, "flinging up their caps and giving many great shouts of joy that they were arrived so neare the Centre of their ungracious wishes . . . but they reckoned without their host."

Propositions were sent in to the Mayor and Aldermen "requesting them in friendly sort in his Majesties name to render possession of their City to Sir Ralph Hopton." The Mayor, in reply, desired Sir Ralph "that he would with his Cavaliers depart from before their walls otherwise they should quickly receive such a greeting from thence as should be smally to their contents." Entrenchments were then made by the Cornish on the west side of the city, and an artillery fire was opened upon it, which the citizens briskly answered from the ramparts. The extracts immediately preceding have been taken from a rare contemporary tract, entitled—*True and Ioyfull Newes from Exeter Shewing how Sir Ralph Hopton, Sir Bevill Greenvill, with divers of the Cornish Malignants, made their approaches thither with five thousand Horse and Foot, intending to plunder that great and rich City; and how they were manfully repulst by the valour of the Citizens, with the losse of fifteen hundred of their Men, on Munday last, being the one and twentieth of November. London, Nov. 25 [1642] (5½ pp.).*¹ Notwithstanding its voluminous title, from which all experience teaches a moderate expectation of what is to follow, this tract gives a

¹ King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. lxxxiv.

really spirited description of a night-sally, led by the Mayor himself, from the east gate of the city upon the rear of the besiegers' works. The citizens surprised the "drunken sentinels," and got into the centre of the enemy's quarters, like "hungry Lyons" bearing down their prey, with halberts, poleaxes, and butts of their muskets. Dutch engineers threw hand grenades among them. Many of the Cornishmen were drowned in the river. Sir Ralph and Sir Bevill, with their officers, stood together opposing to their uttermost until daylight appeared, when the townsmen, issuing from the city on all sides, completed the business, and the army of the besiegers was routed and temporarily dispersed.

There ensued upon this first collision between the Cornish and the Devonshire forces great commotion in the southern parts of the county. Isolated houses were pillaged, horses were requisitioned, and provisions were everywhere swept up, so that whole villages were beggared by the troopers of one or both of the contending parties; and the gaols of Exeter and Totnes were full of prisoners.¹ This

¹ It would be unnecessary, perhaps, to go out of the county for an example to show that this system of plunder, already, it appears, extensively in operation, was not confined to one party. But the following excerpt from a document which has survived illustrates the proceedings of the partisans of Parliament in another part of the kingdom about the same time. It is from a letter of some of the deputy-lieutenants of Kent to a magistrate and a neighbour:—"We have thought upon you as a most fit man, in regard of your known integrity and faith to this cause of religion and liberty, to entreat you to give your best assistance unto Captain George Wither, employed by the Parliament with a troop of Horse, into Kent, to seize all the horses

state of affairs is indirectly alluded to in a rejoinder of the Houses of Parliament, printed early in January following, to a Proclamation issued by the King prohibiting the payment and receipt of customs and other maritime duties to the agents of the Parliament, and alleging the restraint of trade caused by the proceeding of Parliament in engrossing the public funds. The rejoinder says:—"We might here justly take occasion to manifest what have been the causes of the obstruction of Trade, and so set forth the Rebellion of Sir Ralph Hopton in the West, wholly destroying the most flourishing Manufacture of the new Draperies in those Parts; the Robbing of the Common Carriers and Trawnters¹ by his Majesty's Forces and Cavaliers, of Wollen Cloth and other Manufactures, whereby the Commerce and Intercourse of Trade between the Clothiers of remote Parts and the Merchants of City of London is interrupted."²

The fact was that neither party had yet sufficiently realized what war really meant.

At Modbury, in the rear of Hopton's army, the

of malignants and ill-affected persons to the Parliament. . . . You know Mr. Dixon of Hylden, a notorious malignant, hath good coach-horses, and some others, if they be not at home you may help to enquire where they are bestowed. . . . Accompany him to Sir Wm. Boteler's at Teston, and others there, to Robert Hodges, of Farley, and some there who have good horses in their teams for to make dragoons; this will be an acceptable service to the State . . . 15 Nov. 1642." (*Papers relating to Proceedings in the County of Kent*, 1642-46, Camden Miscellany, 1855, vol. iii.)

¹ Men who bring fish from the sea coasts to sell in the inland parts (Bailey). A word now, I believe, obsolete.

² Rushworth's *Historical Collections*, ii. 89.

Sheriff of Devon (Sir Edmund Fortescue¹) and a party of Royalist gentlemen were in the mean time raising the *posse comitatus*. In the first week of December, Colonel Ruthen, with four troops of Horse and about one hundred dragoons, sallied out of Plymouth—not yet, therefore, closely invested—at three o'clock in the morning, and avoiding a Royalist post at Plympton by a flank march swept round by Ivy-bridge to Modbury. The trained bands and volunteers—described as “naked men,” from which it is not to be understood that they were *in puris naturalibus*, but merely unprovided with weapons—dispersed at the first alarm, leaving their officers, with Sir Edmund Fortescue, Sir Edward Seymour, Bart., of Berry Pomeroy Castle, Mr. Edward Seymour, his son, one of the Members of Parliament for the county, “Squire” Arthur Bassett, of North Devon, “a notable malignant,” Master Sheptoe [Shapcote], Clerk of the Peace for the county, Master Bayly of Barnstaple, “a papist,”² and others, to take refuge in the Court House, an ancient mansion of the Champenowne family, at the west end of the town, where they were at once besieged. Ultimately, after the outbuildings had been fired, they sur-

¹ Sir Edmund Fortescue, Knight, of Fallapit, Sheriff of Devon in 1642-3, was at the time about thirty-two years of age. In a fine portrait of him, painted evidently several years earlier, in the possession of W. B. Fortescue, Esq., of Octon, Torquay, he is represented as a young man of almost feminine beauty, with blue eyes, long fair hair, of Cavalier fashion, reaching to the shoulders, and a trace of a moustache only on the face. He is encased in body-armour.

² George Bayley, in 1636-7, was fined £20 for refusing to be one of the Corporation of Barnstaple, “being thereunto chosen” (*Records*, No. lix.).

rendered, and were marched to Dartmouth, put on board the *Cresset* frigate (*i.e.*, the *Crescent*, of 167 tons, carrying twelve guns), conveyed to Plymouth, and thence to the Parliament in London.¹ Sir Ralph Hopton and Sir Nicholas Slanning are stated to have escaped very narrowly; but it does not appear that they were among the besieged party.

The Parliament treated their first haul of eminent prisoners with sufficient consideration. These were brought by sea to Gravesend, and then taken to "the prisons of Winchester-house and Lambeth-house; barges with musquetiers being sent to Gravesend to bring them up safely to the prisons aforesaid that no incivility might be offered to their persons."²

Parliament was now taking the course of enlarging the Committees in the several counties under their influence; and to these Committees extraordinary powers were given for obtaining the sinews of war—powers which came to be exercised arbitrarily and with excessive severity.³

¹ *A True and Perfect Relation of a great and happy Victory obtained by the Parliaments Forces, under the Command of Colonell Ruthin, over Sir Ralph Hopton and his Cavaliers, neer Plymmouth, with the Names of the Prisoners, &c.*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4to, vol. lxxxvi. Several accounts of this affair are extant.

² *The Kingdoms Weekly Intelligencer*, Dec. 27 – Jan. 3, 1642–3. King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4to, vol. lxxxix. Sir Edmund Fortescue was almost immediately removed to Windsor Castle, at that time appropriated by the Parliament. There, in a chamber near the Norman Gate and Round Tower, he beguiled his imprisonment by sculpturing his name, family arms, motto, &c., and the cause for which he was suffering, "Pour le Roy C.," on the walls. He was released in a few months.

³ Thursday, 1 Dec. 1642: "An order was made by the Parl. on

During the greater part of December, Sir Ralph Hopton and the forces under his command were lying about Totnes, or between Totnes and Exeter, the troopers scouting and pillaging the country villages. On the 30th of the month Sir Ralph's headquarters were at Alphington, and again (for the third time, it is stated) he summoned the Mayor of Exeter to surrender the city, to which the Mayor, Mr. Christopher Clarke, returned a firm but courteous refusal. On New Year's day, at three o'clock in the morning, an attempt was made to surprise the city, which, being discovered and repelled, a cannonade was opened on the southern defences, followed by an attempted assault on the north-east side, where the defenders were for a time beaten from their works. A sally was then made with eight hundred men by Captain Alexander Pym (son of the illustrious statesman, John Pym), which resulted, it appears, in another complete defeat of the besiegers. All this is told in a contemporary

Tuesday last That Committees shall be named in all Counties to take care for Provisions of Victuals for the Army raised by the Parl. as likewise for the taking up of horse for service in the field, dragoners and draught horses, as likewise for borrowing of money or plate to supply the Army," &c. (*A Perfect Diurnall of the Passages in Parliament, from 28 Nov. to 5 Dec. 1642*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. iv.) "Malignants of Exeter pressed to contribute money for safety of the Commonwealth refusing were put into ships and sent to sea, which has made them reasonable. One answered that he was an old man of fourscore years and daily expected his departure out of the world, had long since provided his coffin. Knowing him to be very rich they notwithstanding must carry him on shipboard together with his coffin, which they accordingly did, whereupon he relented and gave £800" (*England's Memorable Accidents*, Jan. 9-16, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. vi.).

tract containing an interesting narrative, in the form of a letter, of which the following is an abbreviation :—

On Christmas day we had a false alarm by reason that some three Hundred of Sir Ralph Hopton's Troopers had scouted out and were pillaging the Country Villages thereabouts . . . the Citie being all in an uprore . . . they got into Kingsbridge where Sir Ralph Hopton himselfe is quartered.

All the weeke after we did little . . . sent out parties to discover whether the Cavaliers made any attempt upon any part of the county but they lay very close.

Thus we continued till Sunday morning (being New yeeares day) about three o'clock in the morning I being riding the Round to discover whether my Centries did their duty carefully on a sudden I discovered neare forty Horsemen stealing upon them. Sentries discharged Carbines and retreated to Court of Guard—"in a quarter of an Houre the City was in a posture of defense, onely the cries of women and Children did so trouble us, that I professe I had rather oppose an Enemy in the field though with some disadvantage, than to endure that torment in a City most strongly fortified."

Hopton's guns placed upon the side of a hill which lies on the south side of the City cannonading for three hours—on the N.E. our men beaten from the works and they drew so nigh the wall that they began to cast granadoes over the wall into the city.

Capt. Pym sallied out with 800 men, and with the loss of 25 men seized their ordnance and 17 cannoniers prisoners. By this time the Country came in and fell upon Sir Ralph Hopton's rear and Captain Pym upon his flank with his own ordnance so mauled him that presently he retreated, and having got clear of our forces betook himself to flight ; in

this battle we slew above a thousand of his men and lost not above fourscore or a hundred at the most, besides we took seven pieces of artillery and eight and thirty persons, but none of any note.¹

This is signed, "Abell Hyword," and is dated, Exeter, January 2, 1643.

The writer of the letter was lieutenant of Captain Pym's troop. The sanguinary affair (if the account of the narrator is not an exaggerated one) compelled Hopton to draw off his troops. The retreat is attributed by Lord Clarendon to the want of ammunition, a supply of which was soon afterwards received from France at one of the Cornish ports, "as if sent by Providence"—the historian properly hesitates absolutely to assert that it was part of the divine order of things to furnish the Royalists with gunpowder. It may be suspected that it was in fact hastened by the advance of the Earl of Stamford (or Stanforde as he himself wrote his name), the newly-appointed Parliamentary General of the Western Counties, who, with three regiments of Somersetshire and Dorsetshire men, reached Exeter on the 6th of January.

Hopton's proceedings had prompted Parliament to make further provision, other than what local demands might have already supplied, for the prosecution of the war in the West; and the

¹ *A Famous Victory obtained before the City of Exeter on Sunday January 1. [1643] by Captain Pym, against Sir Ralph Hopton and the Cornish Cavaliers, &c.*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. lxxxix. The title of this tract is misplaced in Davidson's *Bibliotheca Devonensis* (p. 71) a year too late.

following "Ordinance" was accordingly passed on the 24th of December:—

Whereas divers persons well affected to the good and safety of this Kingdom, have contributed in Money, Plate and Horse for suppression of the present Rebellion and Insurrection by Papists, Delinquents, and other Malignant persons in the Western parts under the command of Sir Ralph Hopton and his Adherents, Rebels and Traytors; and for the reliefe of the good Subjects there—Ordered that all who have raised or shall raise money &c. shall be satisfied within six months with interest out of the first moneys that shall be levied in Cornwall, Devon, &c. Hugh Sowden and Thomas Young of London merchants to be Treasurers and Receivers.¹

Sir Ralph Hopton's army recrossed the Tamar at Newbridge, in some confusion, on the 11th of January—ten days, therefore, after the defeat which he had sustained. He was followed by the forces of Ruthen, drawn out of Plymouth, and by those of the Earl of Stamford, which had been augmented by such of the Devonshire Militia as had been collected about Exeter. Near Liskeard, on the 19th of January, Ruthen's army, which was drawn up on "a fair heath between Boconnoc and Bradock church," was met by Hopton's Cornishmen, who had turned at bay, and signally defeated. Lord Clarendon asserts that Ruthen, confident of success, precipitated the engagement with the hope of obtaining the sole credit of the anticipated victory. A letter of striking and vivid interest, written on the

¹ King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. lxxxviii.

evening of the battle, by Sir Bevill Grenville, who led the van of the Cornish army, is extant.¹

173 Further on, I shall again take up the thread of Sir Ralph Hopton's proceedings. In the campaigns of the West during the Civil War, from beginning to end, there is no more conspicuous figure than that of Sir Ralph Hopton. He was one of the most distinguished of the Royalist generals, although neither a brilliant nor always a successful leader. His career is of especial interest for us, as the scene of his greatest victory and that of his severest defeat both lie within a few miles of Barnstaple. It is now time to return to North Devon.

On the 16th of December—the date being fixed by an item in the Summary—the garrison of Barnstaple was reinforced by a contingent of the Militia levies of the county. The entire strength of the garrison in foot-soldiers, as I read the important document referred to, was by this means raised to 640, under the orders of Colonel (Sir Samuel) Rolle, Colonel (James) Chudleigh, Captain Trevillian, and Captain Bennet. The troop of seventy Horse, already in garrison, was commanded by Captain Freeman. This body of troops, it appears, was maintained in the town during the next nine months at the very considerable cost to the Corporation, in “money,” *i.e.*, pay, “and quarters,” of £500 a month.

Not long after the affair with Paulet's marauders, the particulars of which are unfortunately wanting, the garrison of Barnstaple had another opportunity of making a sortie upon the enemy.

¹ See *Notes and Queries*, 1st Series, x. 417.

It seems that the Royalist forces, which lay about Exeter, were not so straitened in the beginning of the month of December, but that their commander, Sir Ralph Hopton, could detach a party, numbering, it is stated, 500 men, under Colonel Acland, and Captain Arundell, to advance into North Devon, secure Great Torrington, and settle the *posse comitatus* in those parts. So much is learnt from the *Mercurius Aulicus* of January 7, 1643, the news-sheet of the Court party, printed and published at Oxford.

Torrington, or, more correctly, Great Torrington, which several times became involved in the military struggle in North Devon, is a small town, situated about ten miles nearly due south of Barnstaple. It is famous for its picturesque and commanding position on the summit of a hill which rises abruptly from the right bank of the river Torridge. The more particular description of its surroundings will come appropriately a little later. A melancholy incident in connection with this occupation of Torrington is to be found recorded in the parish register. Among the entries of burials in December, 1642, is the following, which has been often printed, and as often incorrectly:—

Christopher Awberry gent borne at or by mere in Somsett on of Sr Ralphe Hoptons troopers who was kild by the goeing offe of a muskett unawares upon the maine gard was buried the xxvth of December Souldier Like.

Two days later there occurs this entry:—

Thomas Hollamore was buried the xxvijth day slaine by ye goeing off of a muskett. . . .

probably another victim of the same accident.

From the news-letters in the diurnals of this period it is evident that the Royalist gentry were now on the move, and were combining their endeavours to raise men in North Devon. A writer reports from Atherington:—"At Sir Hugh Pollard his House [King's Nympton] forty or fifty Gentlemen from Tavestocke¹ were feasted upon the two and twentieth day of December, and the day after they went to Mr. Pollard of Filley, Mr. Pollard of Horwood, and Mr. Hatch of Aller and to other gentlemen thereabouts in the North parts, and had great entertainments everywhere, Master Gifford of Brightly excepted, who absented himselfe from his House *to save charges*. At Southmolton, the Mayor feasted them all." From Barnstaple it is reported that "at Tawstock, at the Earl of Bath's house, there hath been these ten days about 200 gentlemen, by their carriage men of quality; yet no attempts against the town have as yet been practised; and how long they mean to continue there, our mayor knows nothing."² These threatening movements alarmed the Barnstaple garrison, and in the town it was evidently believed that an attack upon it was contemplated. The fire-eaters show their colours in

¹ Tawstock, the seat of the Earl of Bath, is meant. The misreading is a common one from which the Calendars of State Papers are not wholly free. It arose from the v and the u being used interchangeably in old writings.

² *True Neues from Devonshire and Cornwall*, December 31, 1642, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. lxxxviii.

a London news-sheet of the last week of December:—Sir Ralph Hopton, who, with his “despicable pillagers,” was overrunning the people of Devonshire, “hath taken Great Torrington and threatneth Barnstable, but that Towne is fortifying itselfe and resolves to spend the last drop of their bloods before he shall gaine it; and they have ordnance sufficient to defend it.”¹

The authorities of Barnstable determined to anticipate the Royalists by a surprise of the party lying at Torrington. This party is stated to have consisted of 200 Horse under Colonel Acland, Mr. Gifford, and Mr. Yeo.² In the gathering gloom of a December evening a body, consisting of 460 Foot and a troop of forty horse-soldiers, set out on their march over the narrow Long Bridge, which connected Barnstable with the left bank of the Taw. A moon just past the full lighted them on their way along a hilly road which still has the reputation, surviving probably from those days, of being mile for mile one of the worst in Devonshire. The following Royalist account of the subsequent affair is from the notoriously mendacious *Mercurius Aulicus*, printed at Oxford:—

They of Barnstable not willing to have such neighbours neere them, with neere 1,000 Horse and Foot did upon Saturday night last, being the last of Decemb. assault the town upon the sudden. But contrary unto their expectation,

¹ *England's Memorable Accidents*. From the 26th December [1642] to the 2nd January, 1642 [1643]. King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. v.

² *The Weekly Account*, No. 2, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. x.

they were so manfully kept out, that they were faine to goe away with the losse of an hundred of their men, which they carried backe on 17 horses with some other carriages ; and this done with the losse of one man only and the hurt of two. After which service done, Colonell Ackland left the Towne and marched to Sir Ralph Hopton's Army neere to Exeter, and came to him at Crediton.¹

There is the usual exaggeration of numbers, if of nothing else, in this account ; and an impartial critic might infer from the strategic movement noticed at the close of the paragraph that the Royalists found their position untenable and that the attack was not so ineffective as the narrator would have had it supposed. In fact, another contemporary publication tells a different story, although it should be taken with equal reservation :—

From Barnstaple they write that the Inhabitants of that Towne, after they had well fortified themselves sallied out to Great Torrington, where Sir Ralph Hopton had left 500 of his men whom they drove from thence, slew ten of them, tooke forty prisoners and 200 armes, and so have freed that part of the county also from those rebellious plundering pilferers.²

I have put these two accounts of the affair in juxtaposition without further comment. They are hopelessly irreconcilable, but are the only ones that I have been able to discover.

¹ King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. iv.

² *England's Memorable Accidents*, Jan. 9-16, 1642-3, Burney Collection, B. M., No. 12.

The Summary records the cost of this expedition:—

For setting forth 460 foote and 40 horse against
Torrington, Jan^y the 1st, 1642–3, with Money
and Victuals, 2 daies £70

The popular mind in Barnstaple during the next few weeks seems to have been in a state of considerable tension. There were rumours afloat of offensive designs upon the town. One of these looms upon us in a paragraph of news in the *Mercurius Aulicus* of February 8:—

Sir Bevil Greenvil with his Forces went towards his own house at Bid[e]ford in Devonshire and hath got possession of the same; by means whereof, it is conceived that he will quickly master Barnstable, being already master of the Haven there, and consequently of the mouth of the Severn.¹

If this was authentic intelligence, of which I have considerable doubt, it must have alluded to some movement immediately after the battle of Bradock Down; but there is evidence that Bideford could not have been in possession of the Royalists at this time or, if so, only temporarily.

The fortifications of Barnstaple were deemed to be yet unfinished, and the time was come for the Corporation to take counsel with the inhabitants in order to “propound a rate” for the completion of the works. A public meeting or “Assembly,” as it was called,

¹ King’s Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. vii. The Grenvilles were lords of the manor of Bideford.

having been "warned," accordingly took place two days after this decision, when a rate was agreed upon for the purpose of defraying the expenses already incurred and of providing for a further contemplated outlay for the defence of the town. The following is the resolution as it is recorded in the "Remembrance Book" :—

[1643.] January 26. It is this day agreed upon that seaven men shall be chosen and appointed to make a rate for moneys to be raysted for the defraym^t of the charge disbursed, and to be disbursed, about the fort and for defensive p'visions for the towne, wch raters are to take a voluntary oath to rate men indifferently, without p'tiality accordinge to their sevrall estates, and none to be by them rated but such as have been rated to the subsidy, and such others as the raters shall think fitt, and that consideraçon and notice be by them taken whoe have already subscribed and paid, and what they have soe subscribed and paid, and alsoe of such as have not yet subscribed att all, and of such as have subscribed and not paid according to their subscripçons, and that such as have not subscribed or not paid and such as shall refuse to pay accordinge as they shalbe rated shalbe taken as malignants and p'ceeded against as malignants and enemies of the towne and such as are ill asserted to the cause.¹

It is not difficult to see in this proceeding the work of Mr. Deputy-Recorder Peard, who was present on the occasion and sworn as one of the "Raters" or assessors, and who was, no doubt, generally advising the Corporation. And it is noticeable how distinctly the local authorities now began to take their tone

¹ Harding MSS., p. 40. There is an imperfect copy in Gribble's *Memorials*, p. 445.

from the Parliamentary declarations. The rate was probably the first of many to which the unfortunate Barumites had to submit as further military necessities arose. So earnest were the Corporation in the prosecution of the work of fortifying the town to which they were now committed, that simultaneously with their other efforts, they appealed to Parliament for assistance, and not without success. The following is from the record of the proceedings of the House of Commons :

23 Januarii 1642. [*i.e.*, 1643]. The humble Petition of the Mayor and Inhabitants of the Town of Barnstable, Cōm Devon, was read : Whereupon—

It is Ordered, That the Committees of the County of Devon do pay the sum of Two Hundred Pounds to the Mayor of Barnstable, to be employed by him for the Defence of that Place.¹

This is the only order with reference to the indemnity of Parliament to the Corporation of Barnstable that I have found. It does not follow that the money was ever paid ; no credit, it may be remarked, is given for it in the Summary.

At this time, that is, in the middle of January, 1643, we find the first mention of " the Fort." This important work, which afterwards came to be known as " the Great Fort," was constructed on the eminence above the town, which terminates the southernmost of the two ridges previously described. The site is still called Fort Hill. Beyond it, to the east, a nearly level plateau extends for a few

¹ *Journals of the House of Commons*, ii. 939.

hundred yards to where the upward slope of the ridge recommences. It was probably at first planned only as an earth-work, but evidently on scientific principles, and the precision of its outlines, which is perceptible after the wear and tear of nearly two and a half centuries, shows that it was skilfully and deliberately constructed. The outer line of the work was nearly a regular heptagon in shape, with bastions, or bulwarks, as they were then called, at the angles; and a dry ditch protected the external face. There were of course embrasures in the parapet of the bastions for the guns, of which twenty-eight altogether were mounted. Whether or not the escarp, or front of the rampart, was revetted, that is, built up on a foundation or retaining wall of masonry, it is now impossible to determine. My own impression is that it was not. What is hereafter referred to as "the breastwork of the trench of the fort," was probably a *fausse-braye*, an intrenchment within the dry ditch itself, masked by the counterscarp and forming an advanced line of defence. There was also an internal structure which, from the existing remains of it, appears to have been a heavy earth-work, enclosing buildings which formed quarters for soldiers, and a *court-du-gard* (an old military term), or place of muster. The face of the escarp was no doubt palisaded like the defences of Bristol,¹ and those of Plymouth, which Mr. Worth thinks were of earth and in their most complete

¹ "These forts be all palisaded; but have no fauxbrayes or fore-defences" ("Journal of the Siege of Bristol," Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, ii. 240).

form "stockaded."¹ The minute and circumstantial description given by William Lithgow of the extraordinary fortifications of London, constructed about the same time, will, however, bring before us a more distinct image of the structure. I take one of the works that were raised at intervals in a circuit of eighteen miles around London as almost a duplicate of it; this was the fort at Wapping:—

Here, close by the houses and the river Thames, I found a seven-angled fort, erected of turffe, sand, watles, and earthen worke (as all the rest are composed of the like) having nine port-holes, and as many cannons; and near the top, round about pallosaded with sharpe wooden stakes, fixt in the bulwarkes, right out, and a foot distant from another, which are defensive for suddain scalets, and single ditched below, with a court du guard within. . . . All the port-holes are soled and syded with timber; the platformes where the cannons ly are laid with strong oaken planks; all the ordonnance are mounted upon new wheelles; besides the pallosading and barrocading of them without, with yron workes and other engynes.²

The Great Fort occupied a remarkably strong defensive position. The road which enters Barnstaple from the south through Newport and along a causeway crossing what was then a marsh overflowed by the tides, being easily rendered impracticable, the fort commanded all other approach to the town on that side. It quite as effectually domi-

¹ "The Siege of Plymouth," by R. N. Worth, Esq., *Journal of the Plymouth Institution*, v. 262.

² *The Present Surveigh of London, &c.*, by William Lithgow, 1643, Somers's Tracts, iv. 539-42.

nated the east, or Bristol, road, which falls into Bear Street, the accustomed approach from West Somersetshire; and it was from that quarter that an attack, at least in the earlier period of the war, was most to be apprehended. It completely blocked another road to the town, and that probably the most ancient one—the earliest London road—coming from the south-east; across this the work was actually thrown up.¹

The Entrenchment referred to in the Summary and elsewhere was part of the general system of defence, and is assumed to have extended around the

¹ I believe that this road, now called Sowden Lane, anciently, and, I have little doubt, down to the time of the Civil War entered the town by the narrow lane called Hardaway Head, which would have been its continuation in an almost direct line—thence following the evident course of Silver Street and Well Street (indirect like the other ancient approaches to the gates of the town), to the South Gate. The name “Hardaway Head” is peculiar and etymologically suggestive. Long before houses had sprung up on each side of it, this road, starting from the South Gate, was probably a causeway passing along a low-lying extramural tract liable to incursions of the tides. Where it began to ascend the slope of the hill the pavement ended, and there it came to be called *hard-way head*. After the Civil War the replacement of the disturbed roadway appears to have been effected in the manner ingeniously conjectured by Mr. Chanter:—“The ancient highway was purposely stopped by the fortifications thrown up at the time of the Civil War, and when after the storm was passed it became necessary to reopen the road, it was found easier and more convenient to carry it round outside the fort, rather than in the old line across it. The new bit of road simply followed the ditch or curtain until it reached a bastion which it was necessary to go round and thus caused a curve which still partially exists” (*Records, Supplementary*, No. 15). It should be added that, by this new departure at a sharp angle from its original direction, the highway was carried to its present junction with the east road.

whole landward front of the town. The cost of it, a mere earthwork as it must have been, fully confirms the idea that may be formed of its extent. From the town mill-lead at one end, to the river at the other, it would have been little short of half a mile in length. No distinct traces of it, so far as I am aware, have ever been discovered, nor are they likely to have survived.

From the Summary we learn the cost of these works :—

In Disbursements for Materials and			
Wages to build the Fort in which were			
mounted 28 Pieces of Ordnance	...	£1,120	0 0
For entrenching the Town	... ..	450	0 0

The damage by the laying waste of land and the demolishing of houses is not included in these items, but appears under a separate head and will be quoted hereafter.

Immediately following the foregoing items is one which, although apparently plain enough in its meaning, has yet led to some difference of opinion, as I shall proceed to show. This item is :—

In Fortifying the Castle, building 3 de-	
fensible Gates, and making 16 platforms	... £660 0 0

The "Castle"—meaning, primarily, the ancient mound with what remained of the keep on its summit, but, generally, the site of the ancient Castle of Barnstaple with its purlieus—there can be no

question, I believe, was colloquially understood in the same sense in the seventeenth century as it is now. Mr. Chanter¹ is of opinion that the "Castle" referred to in the item of the Summary was not this, but the central work within the Fort previously mentioned. I am unable, however, to concur with him in this view. It is unlikely, I think, that the term "Castle" would have been applied to another and an entirely new construction, when there was already a Castle familiarly known by that name to every inhabitant. And it is unlikely that in the Summary, which is distinguished throughout by an accuracy of expression which leaves no room for suspicion that there was any confusion in the mind of the compiler, this structure (supposing that it were part and parcel of the Fort) would have been distinctly separated from the earlier item referring to the main work.

Before the outbreak of the war, and before the Fort was thought of, there was already a magazine of arms and ammunition in the "Castle and keep."²

But if there is any doubt, now, whether the ancient Castle was meant in the distinct clause of the Summary, there was certainly none at the time as to the fact of its being a fortified place distinct from the Fort, if the observations, which I am about to quote, of one who was apparently a personal observer are to be trusted. The following

¹ *Sketches of some Striking Incidents in the History of Barnstaple* [1865], p. 23, and *Records, Supplementary*, No. 15.

² *Records*, No. lv. This is the only instance of the occurrence of the word *Keep* in the Records.

extract is from *The Weekly Account*, No. 2, of Sept. 13, 1643,¹ one of the news-sheets of the time, and, irrespective of the point now raised, is of considerable interest as a contemporary view of the fortifications of Barnstaple :

This Towne of Barnstable is an eminent and wealthie Towne, and ever since the beginning of great strength of horsmen and ammunition, yea and before any word of these troubles was thought on elsewhere the Towne was at least ten thousand pounds charges in making of Out-workes, Bulwarks, and other Fortifications, besides the infinite charge of *a great work in the midst of the Towne*, almost impossible to be taken.

I do not see how the words which I have italicized can be understood to refer to anything but the ancient Castle. Further illustrations, which I cannot now give without anticipating, will occur in the course of this relation and, I believe, amply confirm my assumption.

Fifty-five years ago the Castle mound was estimated to be then 65 feet in height from the bottom of the moat, although it had been intentionally reduced 11 feet not long before. The circular area of the truncated summit was 60 feet in diameter.² It is now from 65 to 70 feet ; from which it may be inferred that some further lowering of the height has taken place in the interval. For a long period subsequent to the Civil

¹ King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. x.

² Gribble's *Memorials*, p. 79. Ethelfleda's famous burh at Tamworth is, or was, about 50 feet in height and 100 feet in diameter on the flat summit.

War the mound, or Castle Hill as it was commonly called, was used as a town play-ground until it was unfortunately alienated from the public ; and it may consequently to some extent have suffered denudation, as geologists would say. To the present and the preceding generation this oldest relic of antiquity which Barnstaple possesses has been all but lost to sight. Hidden by a dense mass of trees in private grounds, no eye living has seen the uninterrupted outline of the ancient burh or Castle mound. It would be curious to inquire how many of the modern Barumites are aware even of its existence.

The "three defensible Gates" were probably formed in the wall which enclosed the precincts of the Castle. The position of the sixteen platforms (for guns) may have been on the summit of the mound—it was a favourite one with the artillerists of the period—although it is equally likely to have been on a base, or bases, excavated from the sloping face of the mound high enough to enable the glacis called the Castle-haye to be swept by the fire from the guns.

The fortification of the Castle seems to have been a work of some magnitude. Powerless against an attack on the town from the landward side, it would easily have rendered the town untenable by an enemy. It is not easy, indeed, to see what was the immediate object of the work except it was the protection of the town from an attack from the sea. That this is not unlikely is shown by the fact that at a little later period a small naval force was added to the other defences and lay in the river. An item of

of the Summary which will be hereafter given refers to two ships which, after the month of May, 1643, were provisioned and furnished "to keep the Port," and a man-of-war that was "set forth;" we shall find that she mounted six guns. The Houses of Parliament had, in fact, so early as in March, 1642, ordered the Lord High Admiral, the Earl of Northumberland, to make known to all masters and owners of such ships as were then in or about any of the harbours of the kingdom and might be of use for the public defence thereof, that it would be an acceptable service if they would cause their ships to be rigged, and so far put in a readiness that they might be at a short warning set forth to sea upon any emergent occasion.¹

Now, it will be remembered that the fortification of the town was begun in August, 1642. The first notice of any artillery being actually in position occurs in a letter dated from Barnstaple on the 30th of September following, already quoted,² in which it is circumstantially stated by the local reporter, who is not likely to have been mistaken, that the town was "fortified with 16 pieces of ordnance." It may of course be only a coincidence, but the correspondence between this number of guns and the number of platforms mentioned in the Summary as having been constructed on the Castle mound seems to me to point to the conclusion that the Castle work was, in reality, one of the first defences undertaken.

There follows from the foregoing contention a

¹ *May's History of the Parliament, &c.*, App., p. 472.

² See p. 75, *supra*.

remarkable consistency between the facts assumed and other evidence which is strictly historical. The total number of guns ultimately mounted appears from the several accounts just cited to have been as follows :—

In the Fort	...	...	...	...	28
On the Castle mound		...	...	...	16
In the Man-of-war	...	...	...	...	6
Total					50

and authorities which I shall quote in due course state that, in the year following that at which we are now arrived, "fifty," or "above fifty," pieces of ordnance fell with the town into the hands of its captors.

If it be asked how the town came to be so conveniently possessed of this considerable armament, the answer, I think there can be no doubt, must be that the artillery consisted of the larger ship-guns taken out of the merchantmen (which were all armed in those days) belonging to the port.¹ Only a few years before, ten of these, averaging about 100 tons each in burthen, had been licensed by letters of marque, and were employed in privateering. In ordinary times these ships were engaged in the Newfoundland fishery, and their coming home, which was customarily in August or September, was

¹ John Rous says, in his *Diary*, that the long-continued peace with Spain had caused such security in the maritime towns and "ordinary shippes" that many had sold away their ordnance, and then, on the breaking out of a new war with Spain in 1625, were enforced to buy new. (Camden Society, 1856, p. 2.)

now opportune for the transference of their guns, in the existing state of affairs, to the defences of the town. Like the shot provided for them (presently to be noticed) the guns, it is to be inferred, were of different sizes—"great and small"—ranging from *sakers*¹ and *minions*—the former carrying a 5¼ pound, and the latter a 4 pound shot—down to the *falcon*, a long 2½ pounder which had been the favourite piece used on board small ships in the time of Queen Elizabeth. These guns were mounted on wooden carriages which, judging from contemporary drawings, were of the same pattern as those which were used down to Nelson's days and later.

To complete these details relating to the fortifications of Barnstaple, the quantities and cost of the ammunition laid in store should be added. These are set down in the Summary as follows:—

		£	s.	d.
For ninety barrels of Powder	...	450	0	0
For four tonne of Match	... ..	112	0	0
For four tonne of Shotte great and small	... ..	72	0	0

During the winter of 1642-3, Charles and his volatile Court were in quarters at Oxford, and the remarkable scenes which were to be witnessed during those months in the picturesque university city have been vividly portrayed by the author of *John Inglesant* in the ninth chapter of that book.

¹ The saker appears to have been the largest piece of artillery used in the defence of Bristol.

Meanwhile Parliament, again appealing for money and plate for the prosecution of the war, traded on the fears of the people by outrageously perverted explanations of the crisis. They warned the Londoners of an army of many thousands of professed Papists in the North, who, it was notorious, would prevent the shipment of coals to London; and their "Declaration" goes on to suggest that "the said Popish Army is advancing toward London with Hope that by this and other Devilish Artifices they may find all in combustion here, whereby they may, with less Resistance, pillage and sack this City, cut the Throats of all men of estate, and ravish their Wives and Daughters without Difference (for Papists, in such Cases, never make Difference between Friends and enemies)," &c.¹

There was no relaxation of the struggle in Devonshire throughout those winter months. The alarm caused by the active proceedings of Sir Ralph Hopton still existed at Westminster, and in an order for money and plate to be raised in Somersetshire for the defence of the Western parts at this time, a Parliamentary Declaration recites that "Sir Ralph Hopton and his Adherents, Rebels and Traitors . . . have levied divers Forces in the County of Cornwall, and in a warlike Manner already entered into the County of Devon, and besieged, robbed, spoiled, plundered and pillaged divers Towns and Places in the said County, and divers Rapes, Murthers, and other Misdemeanors, have acted and committed upon

¹ Declaration of both Houses of Parliament, January 7, 1642-3, in Rushworth's *Collections*, ii. 106.

divers of his Majesty's good Subjects there, and many of them have utterly destroyed." ¹

The battle of Bradock Down, it will be remembered, had been fought on the 19th of January, 1643. Ruthen and the remains of his beaten army, after being dislodged from Saltash, where they had attempted to make a stand, retired into Plymouth. Hopton at once summoned the town to surrender, and, being refused, the Cavaliers, it is said, pledged themselves by oath to capture it, "kneeling on their knees with each man a glass of sack in his hand." The Earl of Stamford withdrew by Tavistock to Exeter.

The Parliamentary forces at that time occupied the greater part of Devonshire so completely as to cut off the Cornish army in the south of the county from all communication with the King, "not one messenger in ten," Lord Clarendon says, "arriving at his journey's end." Exeter was being strongly fortified and was crowded with Parliamentary troops.

At this time (February, 1643), an "Ordinance" of Parliament, which was an Act without the King's assent, was passed for levying a weekly assessment upon every county, to continue for three months from the 1st of March, unless the King's army should be disbanded in the mean time. Devonshire was assessed in the weekly sum of £1,800, and Exeter in £50 10s. "A prodigious sum," indeed, as Lord Clarendon says, "for a people to bear, who before this war thought

¹ Declaration of the Lords and Commons, January 27, 1642-3, in Rushworth's *Collections*, ii. 123.

the payment of two subsidies in a year," which, in the best of times, was proportionately less than one-eighth of this amount, "an insupportable burden upon the kingdom."¹ The names of the Commissioners for the assessment of Devonshire will be interesting as showing who were the political leaders on the Parliamentary side :—

Sir Peter Prideaux, Bart.	Sir Shilston Calmady, Knt.
Sir George Chudleigh, Bart.	Sir Nicholas Martyn, Knt.
Sir John Pole, Bart.	Robert Savery, Esq.
Sir John Northcote, Bart.	Henry Walrond, Esq.
Sir Francis Drake, Bart.	Henry Worth, Esq.
Sir John Davy, Bart.	Hugh Fortescue, Esq.
Sir Edmond Fowell, Knt.	Arthur Upton, Esq.
Sir Samuel Rolle, Knt.	George Trobridge, Esq.

It is stated that the Militia of the county at that time formed a body of 6,579 men, of whom 2,573 were pikemen and 4,006 musketeers. They were nominally officered by gentlemen of the county ; but these gentlemen were now mostly either in the ranks of the Royalists with Sir Ralph Hopton, or prisoners in London, or under scarcely less vigorous surveillance on their own estates. Their places were supplied, partly by the gentry of the Parliamentary party, partly by the needy adventurers, soldiers of fortune—great numbers of them Scotchmen—who swarmed in the Parliamentary armies.²

In the month of January, Sir John Bampffield, Sir John Northcote, Sir Samuel Rolle, Colonel Were,

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 382 a.

² These particulars are derived from the article by the late J. H. Merivale, in the *Retrospective Review*, xii. 205.

and others, had been active in raising a force in the northern parts of the county, and had got together a body of men variously estimated at from eight to nine thousand in number, designed to march southward for the relief of Plymouth. It appears that from the scarcity of arms in the magazines of the county or at the command of the Parliamentary officers, many of these were "Club-men," a term which is met with for the first time in the accounts of this expedition. They were, in fact, men pressed from the farmyards, who, for want of better, were armed with pitch-forks, scythes, and reaping-hooks fastened to long poles, "flayles, spits, clubs, bills and halberts, and such like rusticke weapons." The political views of these irregulars, many of whom were probably willing volunteers, were circumscribed; and at first they doubtless thought it all in the nature of things that they should make a stand against the palpable invaders of their county. It is not perhaps surprising that this portion of the Parliamentary forces should have been styled a "rabble" by their opponents. But in the King's own army, at the battle of Edgehill, there had been some Welsh levies who had come fresh from their native mountains armed in the same primitive style.

Barnstaple supplied a contingent of two companies, numbering altogether 154 men, to this expedition. It was under the command of Captain Benson¹ and Captain Curry; and as the latter, it will be remem-

¹ I have been unable to identify this officer. His name does not recur.

bered, was the adjutant of the trained bands of the town, it may be inferred that his company was drawn, if both companies were not drawn, from the local corps. The fact that the commissariat was supplied at the cost of the town lends its evidence to the supposition.

The neighbouring town of Bideford, which had followed the lead of Barnstaple and sided with the Parliament, appears to have been also represented by a contingent, the strength of which has not been recorded; but it must have been numerically smaller than that of Barnstaple, although it shared, as will be seen, the chief military honours of the expedition.¹ The rendezvous appointed for the whole force was Totnes. We know from local sources that the Barnstaple men set out about the end of January. In due order of time an armed force which, we learn from a Royalist report, was under the command of Sir John Northcote, is found marching along the northern slope of Dartmoor, through Chagford, on its way to Totnes; and with this circumstance is associated an incident recorded by Lord Clarendon, but for the "ignominy" of which, Chagford, the historian hazarded the assertion, "could never otherwise have had a mention in the world."² Although lying far out of what would now be considered the highway, Chagford was on the direct route by country roads, in more common use in those days than they are now or have been in the present century, from

¹ This is a sufficient proof that Bideford was not at that time in the possession of the Royalists. See *supra* p. 109.

² *History of the Rebellion*, p. 366 b.

Barnstaple to Totnes and the south of Devon. Mr. P. F. S. Amery states (*Trans. Dev. Assoc.* viii. 329), that in the seventeenth century there was a regular pack-horse traffic from Barnstaple and Bideford through Chagford to Ashburton and on to Brixham, and that it was a great smuggling route. It is sufficiently obvious that this line of march to the rendezvous would not have been taken from any other than the north-western parts of the county. This consideration may serve us to assume that the North Devon contingent formed part of the force which occupied Chagford at that time.

During the halt at Chagford, the Parliamentarians were surprised before daybreak by Sir John Berkeley,¹ who with what Lord Clarendon calls a "party volant of Horse and dragoons," detached from Sir Ralph Hopton's army, had been on the look-out for them. The most circumstantial account of this attack comes to us through a Royalist medium under the date of February 28; the story therefore had had time to gather volume. The affair is magnified into a "defeat given by the Cornish forces unto those of Devonshire"—at a place called Chagford which the rebels had then newly entered under the conduct of Sir John Northcote. The rebels upon the first approach of the King's forces threw down their arms and ran away, there being 140 men taken in the chase and thirty horses laden with provisions—one whole troop of Horse under Captain Baskerville was taken

¹ He had received a commission under the Great Seal to raise a regiment of 500 Horse in Cornwall. (Add. MSS., B. M., No. 18980, f. 20.)

by the Cornish—the rebels retreated to Totnes.¹ Another account, from the other side, purporting to be an extract from a letter written by the Earl of Stamford, is not inconsistent with the foregoing—but of course omits the losses.²

But the incident for which this skirmish—for it was nothing more—is most remarkable was the death of the gifted and accomplished scholar and poet, Sidney Godolphin — “a young gentleman,” says Lord Clarendon, in his history, “of incomparable parts.” He was the second son of Sir William Godolphin, of Godolphin in Cornwall, and Thomasine, one of the Sidney family, of Wighton in Norfolkshire. He represented Helston in the Parliament of 1640, and was now a Colonel of Horse in the royal service. There is a fuller personal description of him in Lord Clarendon’s autobiography: “There was never so great a Mind and Spirit contained in so little Room; so large an Understanding and so unrestrained a Fancy in so very small a Body . . . and it may be, the very Remarkableness of his little Person made the Sharpness of his Wit and the composed Quickness of his Judgment and Understanding the more notable.”³ Hobbes, the philosopher of Malmsbury, has left an equally eulogistic tribute to this remarkable character. To Sidney Godolphin is attributed the authorship of the beautiful Cavalier song—“Or love me less, or

¹ Abstract from the *Mercurius Aulicus*, 8th week, King’s Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. vii.

² *A True Relation*, &c., King’s Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. xcvi.

³ *Life of Edward, Earl of Clarendon*, 3rd ed., i. 46.

love me more." Bullets, however, are not discriminative, and, as Hobbes says, by "an undiscerned and undiscerning hand"—perhaps, alas! by the base hand of a Barnstaple musketeer—was this gifted man unhappily slain. It is stated in the passage which I have partly quoted from the autobiography of Lord Clarendon that he was shot with a musket, and, without saying any word more than "Oh God! I am hurt," fell dead from his horse; although local tradition will have it that he died in the porch of the "Three Crowns," a hostelry in the village which in its structure still retains probably the same features that it possessed at the time of the event.

The contemporary accounts agree in stating that the Parliamentarians were worsted. Nevertheless, it would seem that Sir John Berkeley and his party, without following up their advantage, retired at once by the way they had come, taking with them the body of Godolphin, which was buried in Okehampton church. The North Devon men, defeated, but not demoralized, continued their march to Totnes.

A brief note in the parish register of Chagford preserves the following record of the skirmish:—

Mem. That there were fower strangers buried . . . the . . . day of January 1642 [*i.e.*, 1643] that were slayend in the fight at Chagford.¹

Of the battle of Modbury, which followed, there are three different accounts, all printed in contem-

¹ *Trans. Devon. Association*, xvij. 340. Mr. Ormerod, to whom we are indebted for this note, states that "the dates of the day of the week and of the month are indistinct."

porary tracts, bound up in one of the volumes of the King's Pamphlets, in the Library of the British Museum.¹ It is a necessary reservation that all three are on the Parliamentary side. I shall now gather from them, indifferently, the story of the battle which Lord Clarendon, the historian of the Rebellion and Civil Wars, did not condescend to notice, and which, for us, has the special interest that in it the men of Barnstaple and Bideford took a conspicuous part.

Early in February, the miscellaneous regular and irregular forces which made up the Parliamentary army of Devonshire met at Totnes. It is stated, and may be easily credited, that the men were raw and not so well disciplined as was desired; and a few days were spent in drilling and organizing them. "The country men [whereby is meant presumably the Club-men] upon exercise proved so valiant and hardy that they desired nothing more than to fall on."² The army, for some days, appears to have been distributed between Totnes and Dartmouth, and at Kingsbridge a depôt of provisions and stores was established. On Monday, the 20th, the whole force was concentrated at Kingsbridge. After a council of war, a party was detailed "to march to a place called Hutton-bridge to make good a passage." There can be no difficulty in identifying the advanced post which was thus seized with the bridge at Aveton ("which," wrote Risdon, in his *Survey*,

¹ Small 4tos, vol. xcvi.

² *A True Relation of the late Victory obtained by the Right Honourable the Erle of Stanford, &c.*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. xcvi.

"we corruptly call Auton") Giffard, about three miles from Kingsbridge, and nearly half-way on the direct road to Modbury. The bridge, which crosses the river Avon at the head of its tidal estuary, is not far short of a quarter of a mile in length. As it appeared in the year 1643, it was partly a narrow paved causeway, raised above the rich meadows which border the river, and partly two series of low stone arches—five and two respectively—which spanned the two channels into which the river is here divided. To secure this, which was the only practicable passage, was a matter of strategic importance. It was here that the Royalists had at first intended to dispute the advance of their opponents. Mr. William Lane, rector of the parish of Aveton Giffard, Mr. Champernowne, and other Royalist gentlemen, had begun to build a fort on a hill (part of the glebe of Aveton) commanding the bridge, but there had been no time to finish it.¹

The disposition of the Royalist forces about Plymouth at this time is learnt from a highly interesting letter, written from Plympton, by Sir Bevill Grenville to his wife, on the 20th of February—the same day on which the Parliamentarians seized the bridge of Aveton Giffard. Sir Ralph Hopton and Lord Mohun, with two regiments, lay upon the north side of Plymouth; Colonel Ashburnham,² Sir John Berkeley, and Sir Bevill Grenville, with two regiments, on the east side at

¹ Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*, part ii. p. 291.

² William Ashburnham, younger brother of John Ashburnham the faithful attendant upon Charles I.

Plympton. Sir Nicholas Slanning and Colonel John Trevanion were posted with two regiments at Modbury to hold it and check the expected advance of the Parliamentary army. This arrangement is described in the following extract from Sir Bevill's letter:—

S^r Ni Slan. wth Jack Trevan. & their two Regim^{ts} were sent the last weeke to Modbury to possesse that quarter before the enemy come, being the richest part of this countrey, whence most of our provision & victualls does come, if it were taken from us we might be starvd in our quarters. Modbury lyes 6 miles to the Eastward of us & now the Enemy wth all the power y^t they can gather of those that we disperst at Okeham. & Chag. & other aydes, advanc'd wthin two mile of ou . . at Modbu: they are many thousand as the report goes, & we are like to have speedy worke. We have sent more ayde to them both of horse & foote. God speed us well.¹

Even Sir Bevill thought hopelessly of the siege of Plymouth, and was evidently conscious of being outnumbered by the enemy in the field. The following passage from the letter already quoted, betrays his apprehensions:—

So now the most danger that hangs over the K^{cs} side is in these parts . . . We have advertizm^t that some ayde is coming from his Ma^{tie} to us, but it is so slowe as we shall need it before we see it. but gods will be done, I am satisfied I cannot expire in a better cause.²

Nominally, all the Parliamentary forces were under the command of the Earl of Stamford, who

¹ Printed in *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Series, xi. 166.

² *Ibid.*

was then in Plymouth. The plan of the Parliamentary leaders was to attack the Royalists occupying Modbury by a force sallying out of Plymouth, at the same time that the main body, advancing from Kingsbridge, assailed them on the other side. The investment of Plymouth appears from this to have been far from complete. In the mean time the Earl was to divert the attention of Sir Ralph Hopton by assaulting his entrenchments on the north side of Plymouth. The Earl accordingly detached a party of about four hundred Horse and dragoons, part of Sir John Meyrick's foot-regiment of London "gray coats," then in garrison, and some volunteers from the town, who marched out in the night between the 20th and 21st of February. The advanced guard was commanded by Sir George Chudleigh and Sir John Pole,¹ and it is remarked that "had the other Brigadoes [that is, of the Plymouth contingent] made an equall haste in their march, the enemy had been clearly cut off."²

The town of Modbury is seated on a hill amongst hills—the rounded hills highly cultivated to their summits, which characterize this fertile centre of the South Hams of Devonshire. Risdon tells us that, in his day, it was well frequented and somewhat the more for the sake of its "nappy" ale³—a

¹ Of Shute, baronet; son of Sir William Pole, the antiquary. His two sons were on the Royalist side.

² *A True Relation of the late Victory*, &c., King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol xcvi.

³ "Assist me all ye tuneful Nine;
Support me in the great design,
To sing of nappy Ale."—GAY.

speciality, smacking of the richness of the surrounding soil, which for aught I know has vanished, as elsewhere, before the overwhelming flood of Burton. The hill is of saddle-back form, and the main street of the little town runs straight east and west, following the dip of the hill along its length. For a century or more, Modbury has stagnated in the back-water, as it were, of the stream of traffic, and its topographical features cannot have changed much since the middle of the seventeenth century. Its most distinctive ornament at that time was the fortified manor-house or "Castle" of the Champenownes—licensed for crenellation in the reign of Edward III.—the sumptuous maintenance of which in the days of Queen Elizabeth, is still matter of local tradition. The mansion which, it will be remembered, had sustained a short siege in the previous December, stood on the eminence near the church at the west end of the town, commanding the two roads from Plymouth, which here met. In this position the Royalists, it may be assumed, resolved to make their principal stand. Sir Nicholas Slanning, who was related to the Champenownes, was about to fight on what was to him probably familiar ground. Slanning and Trevanion, says one of the narrators, had "strongly fortified themselves with brest workes and laid all the hedges round about the Towne for half a miles compasse with Musquetiers."¹ What was meant by the latter part of this sentence is not quite clear. It is not

¹ *A True and Perfect Relation of the Passages in Devonshire, &c.*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. xcvi.

conceivable that any commander would have scattered his force of not more than two thousand men, over a circumference of three miles, which appears to be the literal meaning of the statement. It is more likely that it refers only to the detachments which covered the different roads converging upon the town.

The concerted attack by the Parliamentary forces had been arranged to be made early in the morning of the 21st of February. But such arrangements are rarely carried out with precision, and in this case the plan appears to have been partially frustrated by the tardiness of the Plymouth men, who had been, in fact, entertaining themselves by a raid upon Flete House, then belonging to Sir Thomas Hele, Bart., who was absent with the Court at Oxford and therefore of notorious malignancy. At Flete they took about twenty horses and several prisoners. However, they appeared on the scene, we are informed, in "time enough to doe good service."

"The Bastable and Biddeford men were the first that came on."¹ From this it may be inferred, I think, that they formed the advanced party which had held the bridge at Aveton Giffard, the day before. While the rest of the army was still struggling through the narrow and deeply-cut road which led to Modbury, "before they were aware about halfe a mile ere they came to the Towne, not expecting to be charged by the enemy so soon," the North

¹ *A True and Perfect Relation*, &c. "Bastable" is the still common vulgar pronunciation of the word Barnstaple.

Devon men were encountered by a brisk fire from the Royalists.

At what precise spot the fight began must now be a matter of conjecture ; but I think it highly probable that it was the summit of Stolliford Hill, somewhat more, it must be admitted, than the half-mile from the town at which the narrative puts it, although well within a mile by present measurement. Upon this assumption there is no great difference between the fact of the narrator and the evidently good information which Sir Bevill Grenville possessed the day before, and which is doubtless the full meaning of a mutilated passage in his letter, that the advanced posts of the two armies were then within two miles of each other ; in reality it would have been nearly three.¹ Over the summit of Stolliford Hill the old road, obliterated by the modern one, passed through a slight depression. Until this was reached, to any one approaching from the east, Modbury would not be discovered, and even then only the broach-spire of the church at the western extremity of the town would be visible. At the summit of the hill a lane crossed the road at right angles, running along its crest, and hereabouts the enclosures were small and the banks and hedges of formidable

¹ The popular mile of the period was a long one. In the contemporary *Military Memoir of Colonel John Birch*, printed for the Camden Society, 1873, the distances given by the original MS. in miles between places mentioned are invariably corrected by the Commentator, who was familiar with the country, and in most cases increased by about one half, to adapt them to the modern measurement. The same discrepancy has occurred in the extract given *supra* p. 75. Lord Clarendon notoriously estimated distances in the same fashion.

thickness. Obviously, a better position for defence could not have been selected. It was just the example which Sir William Waller—who if not himself a Devonian, had married a Devonshire heiress and may be presumed to have been personally familiar with what he was describing—had in his mind's eye when referring to the West as a country where “every field was as good as a fortification, and every lane as disputable as a pass.”¹ From a lower hill, skirted by the road, on the eastern side of this veritable pass, and in their front, the Royalist scouts could, moreover, detect in good time the advance of the Parliamentary forces along a straight piece of the road running for a quarter of a mile directly towards them.

In this position, therefore, it appears probable that the advanced party of the Royalists, posted in the lane and lining its hedges extending right and left of the main road, were ready with matches lighted when the “Bastable and Biddeford men,” not suspecting the nearness of the enemy, ascended the eastern side of the hill and were, no doubt, momentarily taken aback.

The further description of the battle will be given in the words of the tract already quoted—written from Plymouth three days afterwards, and printed in London:—

So forward and desperate were the Cavallieres that they let flye amaine upon them, but did little or no execution,

¹ *Vindication*, &c., p. 18.

nor did abate the courage of the assailants; but the *Bastable* men went on with such abundance of resolution, as if they feared no bullets; and the whole Army comming up, and our [*i.e.*, the Plymouth] men joyning with them, they beate the Cavallieres from hedge to hedge. The fight beganne about one of the clocke at noone, and towards night they drave most of them into the Towne, and to their Workes, where they made a very hot defence, and had many men slaine, which they perceiving, and our Forces having beaten them out of their Workes, and falling upon them with undaunted Courage, the Chiefe of them finding the service to be too hot for them, privately stole away about three of the clocke in the morning, (the fight continuing all night) and by degrees drew away all their Forces, by a way which the Easterne Army supposed was kept by our [*i.e.*, the Plymouth] men, but in truth neglected by both, onely their haste forced them to leave their Armes behinde them, and some threescore of their Dragoons to keepe our men in suspence, with command to keepe shooting continually, untill the day appeared; and then to take their Horses and to follow them; but when day came on, our men found out their drift, how they were deluded, and pursued them, tooke fourescore prisoners, and many Horse, much Armes scattered in the way, which they were faine to cast off, that they might flye the faster.¹

The two thousand Royalists—the victors of Braddock Down—held the strong defensive position on Stolliford Hill against the eight thousand Devonshire Parliamentarians (half of whom were, however, a rudely armed and undisciplined mob) for some hours. Driven from this position, where probably they lost their cannon, and attacked at the same time by the fresh arrivals from Plymouth on their flank, the

¹ *A True and Perfect Relation, &c.*

Royalists seem to have retreated fighting, field by field and through the streets of Modbury, to the Court House of the Champernownes, which had been fortified. This they defended during part of the night until compelled to evacuate it.

The Parliamentarians admitted the loss of only seven men killed and a few prisoners. The Royalists are reported to have left behind them five pieces of artillery besides about a thousand muskets which they threw away in their flight. Their loss is further vaguely stated to have been one hundred killed and twice as many wounded, and more than a hundred prisoners.¹ One of the accounts satirically states that fifteen hundred fled, many of them being Cornish "hullers" (by which the hurlers or athletes of the county were meant) and "nimble of foot."

The pious and amiable Puritan who indited one of these accounts of the battle remarks, "You see how the Lord doth follow us with mercy upon mercy ; I desire and will endeavour to follow him with Prayers and Prayses. We heare Sir Nicholas Slane [*sic*] received a death's wound at Modbury, and fell dead off his horse before he came to Plympton, which I hope is true." ²

Both Sir Nicholas Slanning and "Jack" Trevanion, however, survived their defeat at Modbury to fall together when gallantly fighting at the assault of Bristol a few months later.

¹ *Perfect Diurnall*, Feb. 20-27 and Feb. 27-March 6, 1642-3, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. vii.

² *A True and Perfect Relation of the Passages in Devonshire this weeke*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. xcvi.

Referring to this fight, a young gentleman called John Staynings, of Holnicott, Somersetshire, writing from Plympton on the 10th of March to his uncle, John Willoughby, says: "In the way of a soldier I have not been backward, as it hath been knowene unto the rest of the soldiers and officers, and for a performance I have a colour or towe from them which I tocke in the townen of Madborrough wheare the fight was . . . if I could find a convenient messenger I would have presented a colour unto you of the Cavilers." ¹

In the well-preserved churchwardens' accounts of the parish of Modbury there occurs a solitary memento of the event in an entry suggesting some participation, voluntarily or involuntarily, of the townsmen in the defence of the place:—

1642-3. P^d John Springer for castinge and meltinge 172 lbs. of ledd into bullets att 0½ y^e pound. 0 7s. 2d.

At Horncastle in Lincolnshire, a road is still called Slash Lane—traditionally from the execution done there on the Royalists by Parliamentary troopers. At Modbury, the narrow way—little more than a ditch—down the hill at the west end of the town, by which the Cavaliers escaped, goes by the name of Runaway Lane.² Mr. G. A. Cawse,

¹ *Trevelyan Papers*, Camden Society, part iii. p. 233. The editors have erroneously supposed "Madborrough" to be Marlborough in Wiltshire.

² The popular belief at Modbury, according to a high local authority adduced by Mrs. H. P. Whitcombe in her *Bygone Days in Devonshire and Cornwall* (1874, p. 78), is that down Runaway-lane "the inhabitants of Modbury, who were staunch Royalists, were driven by

who in his little work on Modbury disposes of the battle in a single paragraph, assigning it mistakenly to the year 1646, remarks, with reference to the Court House, that "the destruction from assault and plunder to the venerable pile and surrounding works was deemed irreparable, so that the palace of the once mighty Champernouns in Modbury soon fell into decay."¹

While the fight was going on at Modbury the garrison of Plymouth made a vigorous sortie with Horse and Foot, and fell upon the works of the besiegers. In the language of the contemporary narrator they—

. gave on upon the enemies quarters with such valour and fiercenesse, that Sir Ralph and his Forces were forced out of their Works, left good store of Beefe boiling in their pots, and that spacious work which they called after his name, was fired and slylted [slighted = razed], and so the towne of Plimmouth is rid of such an ill neighbour, and by this means they have bread and fresh water, which was their greatest want, the Lord make them thankfull.²

The immediate result of these operations was the raising of the siege of Plymouth. The Earl of Stamford then combined his forces and followed

the soldiers of Cromwell after a siege"! Unfortunately for this version of the tradition Cromwell, to whom, as to another Personage, mischief otherwise inexplicable is often conveniently attributed, was at the time an undistinguished Captain of Horse in the Eastern Counties, and he certainly did not come into Devonshire until nearly three years later.

¹ *Modbury*, by George Andrews Cawse, 1860, p. 17.

² *A True Relation of the late Victory obtained by the Right Honourable the Erle of Stamford, at Plimmouth and Modbury, &c.*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. xcvi.

Sir Ralph Hopton to Tavistock ; a parley took place and an armistice was agreed upon.¹ We shall presently find indications that Sir Bevill Grenville retired with his regiment to his own country between Stratton and Bideford.²

The Barnstaple men seem to have returned at once, under cover of the armistice, to North Devon, and many of the Parliamentary forces to have been disbanded. The Summary has this entry of the expedition and its cost to the town of Barnstaple :—

For setting forth 2 Companies to Modbury, consisting
of 154 souldiers under Captⁿ. Benson and Captⁿ. Currie,
27 daies with Money and Victual £50

This did not of course include the pay of the soldiers, which is elsewhere accounted for.

¹ The parley took place, it is stated, at "Agcombe House." I have been unable to identify this with Mount Edgcumbe, and rather think that it was Edgcombe in the parish of Milton Abbot near Tavistock.

² In Lloyd's *Memoires, &c.*, a collection of Royalist biographies published in 1668, there is (p. 345) a garbled extract from May's *History of the Long Parliament* to the effect that Sir Ralph Hopton "by a Parthian stratagem of a feigned flight" turned upon and defeated the Parliamentary forces during this interval, "in so much that the Earl of Stamford desired a truce for twenty days, which Sir Ralph condescended to, &c." Now, there is not the slightest confirmation of this incident to be found, and Lord Clarendon who, when compiling his history, was in intimate communication with Sir Ralph Hopton, does not make even the least allusion to it. The fact is evident that May, in the actual but very confused account which Lloyd professed to quote, was referring, out of place in the order of time, to the action at Bradock down, which preceded the battle of Modbury. So far was this from being a case of condescension on Sir Ralph Hopton's part, that at the parley, some of the Parliamentary officers thought themselves in a position to demand, among other things, the surrender of Hopton and Slanning as prisoners.

At this time negotiations for a cessation of arms with a view to a treaty of peace were passing between the Court at Oxford and the Parliament at Westminster, but proved abortive. As Secretary Nicholas discovered, the "omnipotent powers" had no real desire for peace yet. The rumour, however, was in the air, and under its benign influence why should not the armistice of Tavistock ripen into an arrangement for at least a local pacification? This is what in fact happened. The idea of the gentlemen of Devon and Cornwall who met together on this common ground was to neutralize the two counties; that the war, if it continued, might go on elsewhere, and that they should combine to resist the entry of the troops of either party into the associated counties. A provisional treaty to this effect was actually made; it was looked upon with favour by the Court, but, Parliament refusing to sanction its continuance, it expired on the 22nd of April.

Whether truly or not, Sir Ralph Hopton was accused of treacherously breaking the treaty by plotting to seize and fire the town of Bideford with the object of opening a way for some supplies expected from Wales. The following is the current report of this plot from one of the authorized news-sheets:—

Wednesday the 12th [April, 1643]. By letters from Devonshire this day to the H[ouse] of C[ommons] from Mr. Nicholas one of their members appointed to oversee the Treaty there, it is certified that Sir Ralph Hopton's Commissioners dealt unfaithfully in the Treaty and plotted to fire the Towne called Biddleford [*sic*] on the sea-coast,

that so they might with more ease transport the Welsh to assist them, which being discovered was declared a breach of the Treaty.¹

The following are further particulars of the story as told in another of the weekly news-sheets :—

From Excester in Devonshire they write, that the Treaty betweene the Gentry of Cornewall and Devon is continued for ten days longer from Tuesday last untill Friday next, and in the mean while the Towne of Beddiford in the North part of the County of Devon should have been betrayed and delivered up to Sir Ralph Hopton in this manner : Sir Bevil Greenvill sent some of his soldiers into the towne like countrimen one after one who confederated themselves with some of the malevolent Townsmen, to surprise the Watch of the Towne and to cut their throates in a certaine night, and then an Alarm sho^d have been given by them as a call to the rest of Sir B. G's Regiment which sh^d have attended neere to the Towne to have come in to their aide and finished the exploit ; but it pleased God in his mercifull providence to discover the Treachery thus ; One of the Conspirators being a Townsman hapned to be drunke the afternoon before that dismall night and in his drunkenesse openly babbled out what feates he and the rest of his Complices meant to performe the night following, which being taken hold of and thoroughly examined, the Conspiracie was discovered and all the Conspirators were instantly apprehended together with all Sir B. G's souldiers that were then in the Towne and their persons secured & committed to safe custody to receive condign punishment according to their demerits.²

¹ *A Perfect Diurnall of the Passages in Parliament*, April 10-17, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. viii.

² *Certaine Information*, &c., April 10-17, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cii.

The plot was probably only one of the numerous scares of the period. But, whatever may have been the truth about it, some alarm was very likely to have arisen from the incident which was thus reported — “that a small bark was taken coming from Wales to assist Hopton in the West Countries, set out by the Earl [he was then Marquess] of Worcester, laden with store of money and plate and five or six hundred arms covered three feet deep with Coals . . . that the bark was brought into Barnstaple, and that three companies were sent from Exeter thither to unlade the same and bring the arms and money to Exeter.”¹ Another report was that these companies were sent from Exeter, not only to guard the prize but to make complete the regiment of Sir John Northcote, “who lieth there to defend those parts.”² There is no allusion to the incident, however, in the local records, and Sir John Northcote’s name is nowhere mentioned in connection with the garrison of Barnstaple.

North Devon was to be the scene of the chief incidents of the campaign which was now reopened with considerable vigour. From the London news-sheets we get, as usual, the floating rumours of the time :—

From Devonshire [it is reported] that the Treaty & Cessation of Arms between them and the Cornish Gentry expired on Saturday last and that now they prepare for

¹ *Certain Speciall and Remarkable Passages*, &c., April 20–27, 1643, King’s Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. civ.

² *Certaine Information*, &c., April 17–24, 1643, *ibid.*

the warre on both sides, for which purpose the Inhabitants of Barnestable and Beddiford had sent 5,000 foote and 9 Troopes of Horse to Holsworthy . . . to fall into Cornwall, which forces were remanded from thence again with much discontent.¹

Although confirmation of this item of intelligence is wanting, there was probably some truth in it. There is room for suspicion, however, that the numbers stated must have been greatly exaggerated.

It may have been noticed that hitherto the Parliamentary party in Devonshire had not produced any military leader of distinction. Henry Grey, Earl of Stamford, was nominally the commander of the forces of the Parliament in the West. Of him great things were at first expected, and for a brief period he was the object of popular adulation, but he proved to be incompetent and useless to the cause.

The secondary officers were, as a rule, merely active and zealous Colonels of Militia, possessing but little military knowledge or experience. There now came to the front a young soldier whose name for a short time was in everybody's mouth. This was Colonel James Chudleigh, a younger son of Sir George Chudleigh, Bart., of Ashton, and grandson of John Chudleigh, the Navigator. James Chudleigh's political leaning may not improbably be traced to his relationship to William Strode, one of the patriots imprisoned in the Tower with Sir John Eliot, and one

¹ *Certaine Information*, &c., April 24-May 1, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cv.

of the five Members impeached by the King. Strode was his maternal uncle. James Chudleigh was at this time twenty-five years old, he had served in the Irish campaign, and had been a captain in Ashburnham's regiment in the expedition against the Scotch in 1640. He appears to have been in command of a party of the Parliamentary levies which occupied Bideford in the beginning of the war. One of the defences which he constructed there on the summit of a hill on the east side of the river was called Chudleigh Fort, and its remains are still visible. He was one of the colonels commanding the 640 foot-soldiers which garrisoned Barnstaple.

On the eve of the expiration of the Treaty, Colonel, or as he is now styled Sergeant-Major-General¹ Chudleigh, with a field force of Horse, Foot, and artillery, occupied an entrenched position at Okehampton with the purpose, it may be assumed, of preventing the advance of the Cornish army, under Sir Ralph Hopton, which was then quartered in Launceston and its neighbourhood.

The little granite-built town of Okehampton, with its atmosphere ever redolent of peat-smoke, lying sheltered in a deep hollow in the border-land of Dartmoor, under the highest elevations of that wild and treeless waste, was destined to be frequently the scene of military marching, countermarching, and occupation during the war. The two high roads which led from Cornwall by Launceston and Tavistock, respectively, to Exeter—the assumed

¹ Sergeant-Major-General is an obsolete military rank, but corresponding nearly to that of Major-General.

“objective” of Sir Ralph Hopton, converged at about three miles from Okehampton before entering it, and, thus combined, the road passed for a mile over a hill, the flank of which rose precipitously out of the valley where stood the ruins of Baldwin’s Norman castle, before falling by a sharp descent into the town. Chudleigh’s entrenchments were on the summit of this hill—on a piece of common land called Stonypark, probably in those days only partially reclaimed; it is now allotted and cultivated. The position lies on the south side of Okehampton church, which stands on the brow of the hill, isolated and nearly half a mile distant from the town. For the purpose of commanding the Cornish road, as well as for defence, it was well chosen. In the rear the churchyard wall, and for that matter the church itself, formed a strong base of support, and communication with the town might be kept open by more than one avenue.

The force under Chudleigh’s command was a division of the local army, having the county Militia for its nucleus, which was being raised for the Parliament in Devonshire by the Earl of Stamford. It seems to have been composed of promiscuous materials. There can be no doubt that the garrison of Barnstaple, of which Chudleigh had been in command since the 16th of December previously, supplied a considerable contingent to this force. The fact that the men were now in the pay of the Parliamentary Committee is the sufficiently obvious reason why this particular service is not mentioned in the Summary. One of the London diurnals

reported as follows :—" From Barnestaple they write that there is 1500 Saylers ready to march against Sir Ralph Hopton's army." ¹ The number was of course an exaggeration—a sort of war-paint designed to intimidate the enemy; but from more than one source we learn that Chudleigh's force was composed partly of seamen-volunteers, and it is implied that they belonged to Barnstaple and Bideford.

The treaty or truce was to expire at midnight of the 22nd of April. On that day Chudleigh occupied Lifton. On the morning of Sunday the 23rd,² the Parliamentarians, being in number about 1700 Horse and Foot, and having with them a few pieces of artillery, advanced to Polston Bridge, which crosses the Tamar about two miles from Launceston.³ Captain Drake's troop drove in an outpost of the Royalists which held the bridge, and the Parliamentarians, preceded by their pioneers, made their way through the fields towards the town, beating out "like sheep," it is stated, the Royalist musketeers, who lined the hedges.

The Cornish head-quarters had received an "alarum" in the night; but the Royalist troops were scattered and evidently unprepared for this prompt resumption of hostilities. Sir Ralph Hopton had constructed a "kind of fort" on Windmill

¹ *A Perfect Diurnall of the Passages in Parliament*, April 24–May 1, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. viii.

² Not the 25th of March as stated by Messrs. Peter. See *History of Launceston and Dunheved*, 1885, p. 263.

³ The original bridge, since destroyed, was about a furlong higher up the river.

Hill, an old beacon station which flanked the eastern front of the town of Launceston.¹ The fight, which began at about ten o'clock, lasted the greater part of the day, and seems to have been mostly what Oliver Cromwell, in one of his letters, calls a "hedge-dispute," although the artillery was brought into action by the Parliamentarians, and "did much execution." Towards four o'clock in the afternoon, Royalist reinforcements coming in, the Devonshire men, who had never reached the town, were compelled to draw off, taking with them by their own account seven men killed and about forty wounded. At this moment some of Meyrick's gray-coats, billeted at Tavistock, who had been hurriedly sent for, arrived on the scene, "led on by a godly minister, the Earl of Stamford's chaplain, in the absence of their commander," and covered the retreat of the Parliamentarians over Polston Bridge. During the succeeding night the retreat continued in great confusion, and on the 24th Chudleigh's broken forces had fallen back upon their entrenchments at Okehampton. The "seamen were all sent away to make good Bidford and Bastable."²

At this time two of the Royalist regiments, one

¹ In the Launceston Records there occurs the following entry:—"April 23rd. They had for the gard 2 seam wood and 5 li candells being the day that the melecia was at Winmill. The Capt. of the gard had 2 seame wood to make bulletts" (Peter's *Histories of Launceston and Dunheved*, p. 265).

² These particulars are derived from a tract entitled *Exploits Discovered in a Declaration of some more proceedings of Serjeant-Major Chudley, Generall of the Forces under the Earle of Stamford against Sir Ralph Hopton*, London, May 2, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cv.

of them Sir Bevill Grenville's, lay in Launceston church. Several entries of payments for fire-wood and candles for the use of the troops in these unusual quarters occur in the accounts of the borough. Captain James Basset and Ensign John Arundell, scions of two great Cornish families, fell in the action of the 23rd of April, and were buried in the church.¹

On the morning of the 25th of April, Chudleigh pushed forward a party of Horse to Bridestowe, a village six miles distant on the Launceston road, to watch the enemy's movements. They returned with the intelligence that the whole body of the enemy was advancing. The disorganization of Chudleigh's force had meanwhile begun. Many men had already "gone away disheartened," and others had gone on the well-understood errand of bringing the deserters back. His transport service had broken down; carriages had been dismissed as not able to serve longer, and no new supply of horses and "plowes"² had come in; his artillery was consequently immoveable. His force within his entrenchments was reduced to about one thousand Foot and sixty Horse. To retreat or to stand still seemed equally disastrous, and to involve the loss of "their artillery, ammunition, themselves, and (by probable consequence) the whole county."³

¹ Peter's *Histories of Launceston and Dunheved*, pp. 264-5.

² *Plowes* seems to mean teams of oxen, in which sense it is said to be still used in South Devon. See *Transactions Devonshire Association*, vii. 525.

³ *Exploits Discovered*, &c., King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cv.

In the course of the day the Royalist army was reported to be drawn out to the estimated number of five hundred Horse and dragoons, and between four and five thousand Foot, on Sourton Down. The road from Launceston, almost immediately after leaving Bridestowe, was for two miles an open track-way over this down—a strip of outlying moor-land on the flank of Dartmoor, from which it is separated only by the wild and picturesque valley of the West Ockment river.

So much of the relative positions of the opposing forces has been gathered from various sources. Vicars, a violent and relentless Puritan writer—immortalized in *Hudibras*—who wrote in what Carlyle has characterized as “a not mendacious, yet loud-spoken, exaggerative, more or less asinine manner,” has left a description of what followed in a narrative which, although doubtless inflated, is graphic and full of minute and interesting detail. It is fair to say, however, that it is not inconsistent with other accounts to be found in the contemporary tracts and news-sheets. Of these there seems to have been a plentiful crop relating to the fight, the alleged remarkable incidents of which had evidently taken hold at once of the popular fancy.

I shall now proceed to quote from the pages of Vicars in continuation:—

This great strait caused or rather forced the Major¹ and his Captains to resolve to draw out their horse, with a

[¹ Here and elsewhere Sergeant-Major-General James Chudleigh.]

purpose to face the enemy and to give order to the foot to march to the townes end, and to favour the retreat of the horse, if need were. This done the Major marched with the horse, the uttermost of their designe being but to skirmish with the enemies forlorn hope, and to put the body of their army to a stand ; that so night coming on, they might haply be forced to lie on the *Down* and so give him time to provide carriages, and to retreat fairly with his Artillery and Ammunition, before the enemy should come on the next morn. But the Lord (usually seen most in greatest exigents and dangers) gave him and some others great courage as they marched on toward the enemy, and the Major espying a plot of ground which seemed to promise much advantage for him to lie in ambuscado, and fair opportunity to charge the enemy ; which in probability, might come upon them undiscovered to their great disadvantage. He, animated with some strong and strange hopes herein, drew his horse (which were but an hundred and eight) into six divisions, gave order that none should give fire upon the enemies Scouts, but suffer them to come on, and to fall into their troops, and so become their prisoners to prevent intelligence. But one of their own men by accident discharged a carbine, whereby the enemy had notice of them and thereupon drew up into a full body, both their horse and foot in good order, marcht on, and some of them gave fire. Whereupon Captain *Thomas Drake*,¹ with a partie of eighteen Horse (being ordered to fall on first) most courageously charged upon the enemies horse, kill'd his first man, commanded his company, saying, *Charge on, charge on, they run, they run*. Presently the Major himselfe charged with the like brave courage and undaunted resolu-

[¹ Captain Thomas Drake was the second son of Sir Francis Drake, the first baronet, of Buckland Abbey, and a grand-nephew of the great admiral. He was about twenty-five years of age in 1643. His son succeeded as third baronet.]

tion, and cried out to his Souldiers, *Charge all, &c.* . . . The enemies Horse, Dragoons, and the Van of the Foot, were routed at the very first assault, and by the help of them, routed the rest of their Army, charging them through to their very Ordnance ; and had not most of the greedy troops failed to charge-on after their Commanders, and fallen to pillage the backes and pockets of such as they thought were best furnished, they had, in probability, driven the enemy from their Ordnance ; But the number of those which charged this thus far was very few, and the Regiment set to defend the Ordnance, was strong, and furnisht with *Suedes* feathers,¹ so that all that was possible to be done, was to rout them thus far, which was two miles from their Van ; and so far, by the mighty hand of God, a few of the hundred and eight, did rout their whole Army, killed divers, hurt many, caused most of them to throw down their arms, made all their Horse and Dragoons, and many of their foot to flie like base Cowards, took one Captain, and some few prisoners, one Cornet, three foot colours, divers staves, and eighteen Drums.

After this the Major endeavoured to rally his horse again, and commanded the foot from the Townes end to the *Down*, to fall on ; but most of the Horse were so spent in that charge of intolerable length, as that he could not get them into good order, and the foot not having their Artillery (which was this while marching to *Crediton*) and hearing two shot of the enemies Cannon, had not courage to fall on, but retreated towards the town ; which the Major perceiv-

[¹ "Double-pointed stakes, shod with iron at each end, and planted before the squad of pikes to prevent an onfall of the cavalry. The whilk Swedish feathers, although they look gay to the eye, resembling the shrubs or lesser trees of ane forest, as the puissant pikes, arranged in battalia behind them, correspond to the tall pines thereof, yet, nevertheless, are not altogether so soft to encounter as the plumage of a goose" (Captain Dugald Dalgetty, Scott's *Legend of Montrose*).]

ing, gave them order to leave their matches burning on the Furzes which were on the *Down*, that neither the enemy, nor the more faint-hearted of their own troops, might discern the retreat of their foot, but continue the apprehension of them, as still ready to fall-on. By this time also the enemy was again drawn into some orderly body ; and our Captains, with such Horses as they could get, charged the enemy again, but it being far in the night, exceeding dark and raining, they did not prosecute their charge, but all the Horse retreated toward the Town, except the Major himselfe, Captain *Gold*, Captain *Pym*, Captain *Drake*, Captain *Downing*, Captain *Fenton*, Captain *Lutterell*, three Lieutenants, one Corporall, and about twelve Troopers. These staid to keep the field, maintained the ground they had got on the enemy, beat back their Scouts, kept off intelligence, and altogether with the foresaid light matches on the Furzes, continued to be formidable to the enemies. . . . Among the visible passages of God's extraordinary working in this businesse was this : that the Devon forces of Horse and Foot were no sooner retreated into the town to refresh themselves for their march to a safer quarter, but the Lord sent the most hideous claps of thunder, lightning and hail on the Down, as the like had not been heard a long time before. These improbabilities strook such terrour and amazement into the guilty conscience of Sir R. Hopton and his traiterous spoiling and robbing crue, that in the morning there was not a man, but divers of their dead, left to be seen in the whole Down, Armes great store, at least a thousand Muskets and Pikes lay scattered in the fields : some Troop and Dragoon Horses were left behinde, five barrels of powder ; and one the enemies themselves had blown up, a great quantity of match, many instruments for Pioners, Portmantas, Snapsacks, *Swedes* Fethers, and such kind of Implements, with divers peeces of armour and some apparrell. All these the Souldiers and countrey-people

adjacent made pillage of, whiles the Cornish returned to their Countrey, with losse, shame and guiltinesse.¹

I have discovered a contemporary letter giving another, and a highly interesting, account, of the two fights, which will be of especial interest, as having been written from Barnstaple. Its author signs with the initials "W. N."—not improbably William Nottle, one of the Council of War at that time. It is as follows:—

BARUM the 28 of Aprill, 1643.

MY CONSTANT FRIEND,

Your health wished &c. I received your Letter by the Post, and doe thanke you for your intelligence, our forces being not above 1500 lay on Friday last 10 miles from Lancestone, but on Saturday they advanced to Liston within 3 miles of Lancestone, and yet in Devon where they thought to have met with 3 or 4 regiments of trayners those being all Sea-men and Volunteeres, but there was no aid come thither as was promised by the Lieutenants: Sergeant Major *Chudleigh* commanding in chiefe. Of these 1500 on Sunday morning at 10 of the clock marched over Poulson bridge into Cornewall, upon this ground hearing that there was not above 1000 men and that of Sir *Bevel Greenvils* Regiment, so that he thought to have set upon Lancestone, but before they came neere the Towne the Cavaliers came out and lay halfe a mile off the Towne in hedges, and shot upon our men from 10 till 3 or 4 of the clock, but our men beate them from hedge to hedge till they were come neere home to the Towne; and then about 5 or 6 of the clock there was 2 or 3 Regiments came in to the helpe of the Cavaliers, but we held two or three small brasse peeces which did great execution among them, but their number

¹ Vicars's *Jehovah-Fireh, God in the Mount*, pp. 317-318.

being so much increased they were like to have begirt our men round, and had sent a great number to the bridge, but by the providence of God 500 of the E. of *Stampfords* men came in from Plymoth and cleered the bridge, and our men made a faire retreat about 9 of the clock at night on Sunday and marched to Southampton [Okehampton], but I must tell you that our men killed above 20 for one, we lost but 8 men, and they lost above 200 and some say for certain 240 whereof M. *Basset* their high Sheriffe was one shot in two by our brasse peeces, blessed be God for this mercie. Well, our men on Munday came to Southampton [*sic*] 15 miles from Lanson in the way to Exeter: The Cavaliers on Tuesday advanced from Lanson into Devon, Sir *Ralph* came but with 4000 almost starved poore Cornish and 500 horse, our men by their Scouts sent out, brought newes to Major *Chudleigh* that the Cornish Armie was within 4 miles of the Towne, they sent out 3 Troopes of Horse, Major *Chudleigh*, Captaine *Gould* and Cap. *Drake*, which in all made but 108 horse, who lay close under a hill where the enemie was to come, who just in the edge of the evening came to the place our horse possessed, our men presently charged the Van very furiously, got their word, and fell in among them pel mel: Cap. *Drake* slew 12 or 13 with his battel axe and sword, and one of his Corporals the like number, he charged through and through the midst of the Armie, and had the foote come up had gotten their guns, being 3 they had possession of them but wanted foote to carry them away: It is thought the Cavaliers kild one another, seeing they saw them kill their fellows that had the worde, there was no difference but our men in the moonelight knew every one by his skarfe and colours, our men killed above 120 of them tooke 6 or 700 Arms, buffe coats and scarlet coates store, 12 drums, 3 Ensines, 11 prisoners, swans feathers, and much other pillage, and beate them back to Lancelstone where they

shamefully arived wednesday the fast day, but we must not ascribe it to man but to God, that they had this great successe, being above 45 to one man. One thing is remarkable, that as soon as our horse charged them being on great downe, it grew darke and it thundered and lightned in a very terrible manner, and the thunderclap brake just over their heads and then raine extraordinary, and it was a very great winde and hard weather all that day and night, and they were amazed at our suddain charge, that they ran amaine to save their lives. So let all our enimes perish.

There was a Letter intercepted which came from the King going to Sir *Ralph Hopton* 3 or 4 dayes since neere *Exon* wherein he wrote that he should come away to his helpe speedily, and it is thought that if he could have cut off that little force wee had in Southampton [*sic*] then hee would have plundered the Countrey when we had gone, and so gon away to the King, but he is gone to his corner with weeping crosse: Lord *Major* [? Mohun] lost his scarlet coate and Sir *Staning* [Nicholas Slanning] his skarfe and many beaver hats found cut and hewed, it is thought [there] is 500 hurt of them, hee [we] lost in the last fights 5 or 6 horses but not one man, and 3 or 4 hurt, Gods name be glorified. Pray let us heare what newes, You I hope this weeke will produce great newes, God send it to be good, under God this war doth ly much on the E. of *Essex* his Army if well or ill, therefore it concernes London to afford him all the helpe you possible can, your true friend for Jerusalems peace, I rest,

W. N.

*I heare the Letter from the King was written upon white Sattin and found in a clokebag, wherein was many papers. and will discover all our Malignants of Devon.*¹

¹ Printed in *A Full Relation of the Great Defeat given to the Cornish Cavaliers by Sergeant-Major-General Chudley*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cv.

I know of nothing in the whole story of the war more calculated to be impressed upon the imagination than this brief entry in the Journal of Master John Rattenbury, attorney and town clerk of Okehampton, who, if he was not an actual witness of the fight, must have been within hearing of every rumour which came from the field during that hurly-burly of wind and storm and human strife:—

And there was a fight at Meldon downe by night in a great tempest of wind and rain.¹

Meldon Down is a continuation of Sourton Down, in the direction of Okehampton, and may be taken, on the authority of Rattenbury, to have been the precise scene of this striking incident.

In this remarkable action is apparently to be observed the effect of a sudden rush of cavalry in producing a panic and its overwhelming consequences. It was, in the language of the news-sheets, a “most miraculous and happy victory”—a “great Deliverance and a wonderful Victory” for the Parliamentarians. Vicars was fairly carried away by his enthusiasm and his “asinine” characteristic is finely exhibited. “Such a wonderful victory as hath not hapned since this warr began nor may be paralleled by the stories of many ages past: the memory whereof most worthily deserves to be engraven on a markable pillar or high trowing Pyramides”! ²

¹ Rattenbury's Diary. *Some Account of the Barony and Town of Okehampton*. From the Collections of William B. Bridges [1836].

² *Jehovah-Jirah*, p. 319.

In accordance with the ideas which prevailed at that time, this remarkable conflict was supposed to have been attended by some peculiar supernatural evidences. When, only a few years before, the astute Joseph Hall, then Bishop of Exeter, had pronounced one of the severe thunderstorms, which occur on the borders of Dartmoor, to have been "plainly wrought by a stronger hand than Nature's," it is not surprising if commoner people were influenced by the same superstition. And so we are told—the story coming to us from the Cavalier side—that in the midst of the storm "one of the enemy's scouts came in sight mounted on a great black horse at whom the sentinels gave Fire and missing him concluded among themselves that it was the Devill which had appeared to them : Reporting the same to others of the Army, which did breed a general consternation among them." ¹ The Puritan interpretation of the extraordinary weather was that "the Lord sent Fire from Heaven so that the Cavaliers Powder in their Bandaliers, Flasks and Muskets took Fire, by which Meanes they hurt and slew each other to the Wonder and Amazement of the Parliament Forces." ² The supernaturalism of these accounts, it will be observed, is rather comprehensive. The bare fact of this remarkable effect of lightning is more circumstantially given by one of the diurnals which says

¹ Baker's *Chronicle*, 3rd ed., 1660, p. 450.

² Extract from the title of a tract, *Joyfull Newes from Plimouth, &c.*, in Davidson's *Bibliotheca Devoniensis*, p. 71. (This tract is not placed in its proper chronological order in that work.)

that the lightning fired many of the Cavaliers' bandoleers, by which their clothes, faces and hair were burnt, and that many of the wounded and "scalled" men died in Launceston. And a curious confirmation of this is to be met with in the Launceston accounts, in which there is an item of payment for "sending 3 malitia men by a pass into Devon that were scalded, 6d."¹

The Royalist song-writers were not slow to satirize the gush of Puritan triumph. The following are the first two verses of a ballad entitled "A Western Wonder" attributed to Sir John Denham:—

"Do you not know, not a fortnight ago
How they bragg'd of a Western wonder?
When a hundred and ten slew five thousand men,
With the help of lightning and thunder?

There Hopton was slain, again and again,
Or else my author did lie;
With a new thanksgiving, for the dead who are living,
To God, and his servant Chidleigh."²

Hopton was reported, and not for the first time, to have been killed.

The moral effect of this defeat on the Cornish army was not less remarkable than the physical.

¹ Peter's *History of Launceston and Dunheved*, p. 264. The date given by Messrs. Peter is, to me, doubtful; and I think it not unlikely that the incident is to be fixed by the foregoing story.

² I have taken this from Mr. Henry Morley's Collection, 1868, p. 95. The version in the Reprint of the *Rump Songs*, i. 134, is obviously imperfect.

Lord Clarendon, who passes over the action itself with the briefest possible notice, admits that it "struck a great terror into" the Royalists, "and disordered them more than they were at any other time."¹

During the construction of the defensive works around Barnstaple the Corporation seem to have had to encounter an unexpected difficulty. Some of the owners and occupiers of the lands interfered with, however quietly they may have acquiesced in the prevailing political sentiment, resisted the encroachment upon their private rights. It became necessary, therefore, to resort to martial law to override such obstacles. The following is a copy of a warrant accordingly issued by the Earl of Stamford. We gather from it that the Great Fort was now finished, and, as a detail, that the trees which interfered with the line of fire from its guns were to be felled. Banks and hedges could be and were restored, but who shall say how much was lost by this sacrifice of the trees?

Whereas for the defence of the Towne of Barnestaple, it is verie needfull, that the same be secured and fortified by Intrenchm^t. and other works and fortificaçons on the East parts thereof, and that the Trees hedges and bancks wthin ayme and Comaund of the Fort there made, hindringe Service and Execuçon from the Same be Cutt downe sleighted and Levelled, And wheras alsoe I am informed that some Owners and Possessors of the Lands and grounds in and through w^{ch} the said Trench and works are to be

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 425 b.

made, p'ferring their owne private Interests and Cõmoditie before the publike and Cõmon good and Safetie, have hindered and opposed the doing thereof, It is therefore hereby Ordered, And I doe by theis p'sents Authorize and Require all and eu'y the well affected Burgesses and Inhabitants of the said Towne, and all other psons by them or any of them to be employed in this behalfe, wth all expediçon to pceed and goe on to make Intrinchments and any other works or fortificaçons necessarie for the defence of the said Towne, in and through the Lands and grounds of any Person or Persons whatsoever and to Cutt downe sleight leuell and remove any Trees hedges bancks or other things whatsoever, w^{ch} may hinder or be p'iudiciall to the Ayme execuçon or service of or from the fort or any other fortificaçons or works soe to bee made For the doing whereof this shalbe yo^r sufficient warrant for your discharge and indempnitye. Given vnder my hand and Seale this xth of Aprill 1643.

STANFORD.¹

This was followed by an Act of Indemnity (so far as an "Ordinance" was an Act) to all the parties concerned, passed by both Houses of Parliament, of which the following are the records in the Commons Journals:—

[29th of April 1643.] Ordered, that Mr. Serjeant Wilde do bring in an Ordinance for the Fortifying of Barnestaple; and for the Indemnity of such as shall fortify it.

[2nd of May 1643.] The Ordinance concerning Barnestable, the keeping them from Indemnity, for making of Forts on other Mens Ground, was read; and assented unto; and ordered to be sent up to the Lords for their Concurrence.

¹ Tanner MSS., Bodleian Library, lxii. f. 48.

[The same day] the Lords concurred concerning the Town of Bastable.¹

The following is a copy of the Ordinance from another source :—

An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament, for protecting and saving harmlesse all such as shall use their best endeavour for fortifying and preserving the Town of *Barnstable* in the County of *Devon*.

Die Martis 2 Maii, 1643.

Whereas divers well affected Burgesses and Inhabitants of the Town of Barnstable, in the County of Devon, out of their good affection to the publique, and by warrant and direction from the Earle of Stanford, Lord Generall of the Forces raised by Authority of Parliament in the Western parts, of this Kingdom : Have for the necessary defence of the said Town in the times of eminent danger, and actuall Warre in those parts, made, or caused to bee made divers intrenchments, Fortifications, and Workes in and about the said Town, in and through the Lands and grounds of severall Persons, and for the doing thereof, have been and may bee occasioned to cut down, slight, levell and remove the Trees, Hedges, Banks or other things whatsoever, which may hinder or bee prejudiciall to the ayne, execution or service from the Fort there, or any other Fortifications, or Works, in, or about the said Town : It is Ordered by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, That whatsoever the said Burgesses and Inhabitants of the said Town, or any of them, or any other Person or Persons by them employed, have, or hath done, or shal do in, and about the Premises, is good & acceptable service to the Common-wealth : And that they, & every of them for so doing, shall be therein

¹ *Journals of the House of Commons*, iii. 63, 67.

protected and saved harmlesse by Authority of both houses of Parliament: And all such Persons as shall oppose the same, shall be proceeded against as contemnners of this Ordinance. And such Owners and Possessors of any Lands or grounds that shall suffer any damage thereby, shall have reparations out of the publique.¹

Chudleigh's victory had checked, at least for the time, the advance of Hopton's Cornish army. It seems, moreover, to have become known to the Royalists that behind Chudleigh a much superior force was now preparing to march against them. Hopton's troops, cooped up in the northern corner of Cornwall about Launceston, were, meanwhile, in great straits. They had been only scantily supplied through Falmouth with arms and ammunition, procured in France by Sir George Carteret, the Governor of Jersey. And they had so far exhausted of provisions a poor country, that even the officers, it is said, had at last to be content for two days with a biscuit a day each.

A tract printed about this time² mentions the names of some of the Royalist gentry—"delinquents," of course, they are styled—who, by information received from Plymouth, are reported to "follow the army" of Sir Ralph Hopton. Those of Devonshire are the "Sheriff of Devon" (Colonel Acland), "Colonel Thomas Fulford of Fulford," and

¹ *Husbands's Collection of all the publicke Orders Ordinances and Declarations of both Houses of Parliament, &c.*, London, 1646, p. 156.

² *A true Relation of the Proceedings of the Cornish Forces under the command of the Lord Mohune and Sir Ralph Hopton, &c.*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cvii.

"Gifford of Brightley, Esquire." There was also a cleric in this unusual association, Edward Cotton, Archdeacon of Totnes and Rector of Shobrooke. It is of some interest also to learn that there were many "Reformado Captains, being a company of younger Brothers." "Reformado," a term frequently met with in the histories of the Civil War, means, I believe, simply *unattached*, as now understood. They were, in fact, volunteers.

On the 11th of May, the Earl of Stamford set out from Exeter for the rendezvous of the Parliamentary army of Devonshire at Okehampton. When brought together, these undoubtedly heterogeneous forces, according to credible information, derived, it is said, from its own officers, consisted of 1,400 Horse and dragoons and 5,400 Foot, "by the poll." These were mostly the Militia levies which the Parliamentary Committee during the preceding months had been actively organizing. A train of artillery, consisting of thirteen brass guns and a mortar-piece,¹ was attached to the force. It has been assumed, but on no sufficient authority, so far as I know, that the army marched out of Exeter of this strength;² but Chudleigh's division, which was certainly included, already, as has been seen, occupied Okehampton, the appointed rendezvous.

Sir George Chudleigh (father of the Major-General) was detached with 1,200 of the Horse to march to

¹ Mortars to throw shells filled with powder had only just come into general use, although they had been invented as early as in the reign of Henry VIII.

² See Jenkins's *History of Exeter*, 1806, p. 159.

Bodmin by a route not mentioned, but evidently by the Tavistock road, which had been practically cleared of the enemy by James Chudleigh's victory. The meaning of this movement or diversion, if it may be so called, is not obvious; and we learn only through Royalist sources that its object was to overawe the Sheriff of Cornwall and prevent further Royalist levies from being made, and also to cut off the anticipated retreat of Hopton's army. The destination of the remainder of the Parliamentary forces was Stratton; where they eventually took up a strong position on a hill within a mile of that town. The Horse, not exceeding by all accounts two hundred, appears to have already reached Stratton on the 12th of May,¹ and the Foot probably followed on the 13th and 14th.

It has been already surmised that part of Chudleigh's division had been drawn from the garrison of Barnstaple. We have now good evidence of this in the fact that Captain Freeman, commandant of the troop of Barnstaple Horse, was present with the force at Stratton. The same reason already suggested will account for the absence of any mention of this particular service in the Summary—the contingent was in the pay of the Committee. The town, however, had to contribute to the victualling of the Parliamentary army, as appears from the following item in that useful record:—

For Bisquett, Bacon, Pease and Beere,
sent to Stratton by order to the Army,
May 3, 1643... .. £106 0 0

¹ *A Perfect Diurnall*, &c., 15-22 May, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. ix.

The date of this entry in the Summary seems to show that the destination of the force had been determined several days before the advance. The Parliamentarians were taunted by their adversaries on account of the abundance of their commissariat and the ample supplies of their ammunition, of both of which necessities the Royalists were themselves painfully deficient.

The plan and object of this expedition are even now, by the light of its sequel, utterly incomprehensible, and no contemporary explanation is available. The general aim may be assumed to have been that of preventing Hopton's advance from Launceston. The Earl of Stamford knew, from a letter found amongst the spoil of Sourton Down, that the King had ordered Hopton to come to him at once, and with such urgency that Hopton was advised to mount his foot as dragoons. What, then, was the motive of Stamford's roundabout march to Stratton, more than fifteen miles beyond the enemy's left flank? Can it be that there was anything in the obscure rumours of a descent of a Royalist force from Wales upon the North Devon coast, which have been quoted from the contemporary news-sheets, and that part of the Earl of Stamford's scheme was to intercept this threatened support to the army of Hopton? I can only put these questions without being able to supply an answer to them. To the ordinary mind, not pretending to any deep insight into military strategy, the object of the commander of the expedition may appear to have been that of contriving for Hopton (whose head-quarters it will be remembered were all

this time at Launceston) an easy outlet of escape between Sir George Chudleigh's Horse and the main body of the Parliamentary army. This, however, was not the opportunity which Sir Ralph Hopton chose to take advantage of; on the contrary, he determined at once by a forced march, which, if considered, must be deemed a remarkable one, to assault the Parliamentarians in the position which they had taken up at Stratton.

Geographically, Stratton is not in Devonshire, although close to the north-western border of the county. Lying in that extreme angle of Cornwall which is ethnographically more Devonian than Cornish, it may be said, perhaps, that if not in Devonshire it ought to be. The site of the battle is, however, really in the adjoining parish of Poughill.

The battle of Stratton, in which were arrayed against each other the men of Cornwall and of Devon—representing almost accurately by their two counties the two factions into which the nation was unhappily divided—was fought on Tuesday, the 16th of May, 1643. There are two graphic historical accounts of the battle which have come down to us—one by Lord Clarendon, and the other by Dr. Thomas Fuller, the quaint and facetious author of the *Worthies of England*. Both accounts, from certain internal resemblances which they bear to each other, appear to have been derived from the same source; and Fuller, who was afterwards chaplain to Sir Ralph Hopton, states that he obtained his information from a paper revised by Hopton him-

self.¹ We may be sure, therefore, that the Royalist commander was the common authority of both writers.

The Cornish army marched from their quarters in and about Launceston on Monday, the 15th, and reaching Stratton stood to their arms all that night. By five o'clock on the morning of the 16th, the disposition of the forces described in what follows had been made :—

The number of foot was about two thousand four hundred, which they divided into four parts, and agreed on their several provinces. The first was commanded by the Lord Mohun and Sir Ralph Hopton ; who undertook to assault the camp on the south side. Next them, on the left hand, Sir John Berkeley and Sir Bevil Greenvil were to force their way. Sir Nicholas Slanning and colonel Trevannion were to assault the north side : and, on the [their?] left hand, colonel Thomas Basset, who was major general of their foot, and colonel William Godolphin were to advance with their party ; each party having two pieces of cannon to dispose as they found necessary ; colonel John Digby commanding the horse and dragoons, being about five hundred, stood upon a sandy common which had a way to the camp, to take any advantage he could on the enemy, if they charged ; otherwise, to be firm as a reserve.²

The “ sandy common ” upon which Colonel Digby's Horse and dragoons were drawn up is easily identifiable as Burn Downs—a level piece of ground lying a little way from the base of the hill on the south-west, now divided into three or four fields and still apparently only half-reclaimed.

¹ *Worthies of England*, Cornwall, Ed. Nuttall, 1840, i. 331.

² Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 424 a.

No Devonian or Cornishman would agree with Lord Clarendon in calling the site of the battle a "very high hill." As the historian wrote the account amidst the tamer scenery of Jersey, the imagination of his informant and fellow exile Hopton may have magnified, by comparison, the physical features of the scene. Stamford Hill—as it has been called since the battle—but more properly (according to a local informant) Grist Hill, is however a prominent object in the landscape as the last of the series of rolling hills which here subside into a tract of comparatively level ground extending a mile or so farther to the sands of Bude. The hill is elliptical in shape, having the longer axis running north and south. At the foot of the southern slope is the little town of Stratton, standing on a slight eminence where the narrow valley, on the eastern side of the hill, opens out. The town, which numbers scarcely more than a hundred houses closely packed together and crowned by the stately church-tower with massive pinnacles of the type common to this part of the country, has no modern accretions, and its present aspect differs probably but little from that which it presented in the seventeenth century.

The side of the hill which rises out of the deep valley above the town was very steep—it may almost be said precipitous—and quite impracticable for horsemen. Everywhere else the slopes of the hill were easy, broken by a few fences which, it may be, existed then as they do now and were held by the defenders. There is no reason to doubt that the remains of an earth-work still to be seen on the

summit of the hill are those of an entrenchment thrown up by the Parliamentarians, where, as Fuller says, they "advantageously barricaded themselves." This earth-work was in the form of a circular arc of about two-thirds the circumference of the circle, and from sixty to seventy paces in diameter; the gap was opposite the eastern or steepest face of the hill from which an attack was least to be expected. The entrenchment was evidently intended only for the protection of the ammunition stores and baggage-train; it was too small to be any cover to more than a fraction of the defenders. Guns mounted here would have been of little use offensively, as they would have only commanded a small extent of the natural glacis of the hill on the western side. The lighter field-pieces were probably planted on the brow of the hill.

On the almost level area of the summit of the hill the whole of the Parliamentary Foot were drawn up in battalia. Close as the infantry formation was in those days, every inch of the ground must have been occupied. Here Major-General James Chudleigh was virtually in command. The small body of Parliamentary Horse, which seems to have been completely paralyzed, was kept inactive at a distance and took no part in the battle.

The numerical strength of the two armies respectively may be thus recapitulated:—

	Horse and dragoons.	Foot.	Total.	Guns.
Royalist	500	2,400	2,900	8
Parliamentarian...	200	5,400	5,600	14

The position of the Parliamentarians, surrounded and vigorously attacked by the Royalists, in accordance with the pre-arranged plan, in front, rear, and both flanks at once, was as obstinately defended. The Cornish pikemen and musketeers in their successive assaults by the four several ways up the hill were as often driven back and overpowered by the superior numbers of the Devonshire men. The fight continued in this way, without any decisive advantage on either side, from five o'clock in the morning until three in the afternoon. At one period, Chudleigh himself with a body of pikemen charged Sir Bevill Grenville's regiment which was engaged on the west slope of the hill and threw it into disorder, Sir Bevill being "in person overthrown;" from which unusual expression we somehow get a picture of the knight in full armour (as he probably was) borne down from his horse: The disaster was retrieved by Sir John Berkeley, leading the musketeers who flanked Sir Bevill's pikemen on each side. In the midst of the struggle that ensued Chudleigh was taken prisoner. Towards three o'clock, the ammunition of the Royalists beginning to run short, orders were passed round for a simultaneous advance and a general storm of the position with sword and pike only. Thereupon, some of the Parliamentary guns, of the effect of which no mention is made and which very likely had been fired over the heads of the assailants, were seized and turned upon the camp. The Devonshire Foot thus resolutely pressed, and discouraged by the loss of their favourite commander, broke into confusion; hundreds surrendered them-

selves as prisoners and the rest became a crowd of fugitives. So ended this hotly contested battle.¹

The Royalists admitted the loss of but very few men and of no considerable officer. According to the same authority, about three hundred of the Parliamentarians were killed on the field, seventeen hundred were taken prisoners, and all their cannon, seventy barrels of gunpowder, and a large magazine of biscuit and other provisions fell into the hands of the captors.

Then followed a remarkable scene which, if not peculiar to Cornwall, was not what is commonly believed to have been of the sort usually witnessed

¹ Since the above was written, Dr. Samuel R. Gardiner's *History of the Great Civil War—1642-49*—has been published (1886). Dr. Gardiner differs from me in some unimportant details of description, but I see no reason for altering what I have written. In a note at p. 81 of vol. i., he says that "Lord Hopton's account of the affairs of the West," which is mentioned in the *Calendar of the Clarendon MSS.*, under the number 1,738 (1) is not only missing, but has evidently never been bound up with the other MSS. At p. 161 (*note*) he suggests that "a more correct account" of the battle of Stratton would be possible if the lost document could be recovered. He was apparently not aware of the version given by Fuller, of which I have made use, and which was derived, according to Fuller, from Sir Ralph Hopton's own manuscript, being "a memorial of the remarkables in the West"—probably the identical paper which is missing, and it is obvious from internal evidence that it was also, as I have suggested, the basis of Lord Clarendon's narrative. Dr. Gardiner, who wrote his description after personal observation of the ground, suggests a doubt whether the earth-work mentioned above was thrown up at that time or had a far earlier origin. Of course either is incapable of actual proof. The work certainly would have done little credit to the skill of the Dutch engineer who was employed at that time in the defence of Exeter, and who, if one may conjecture, accompanied the expedition. All that can be said is that it has none of the characteristics of an ancient British hill-fort—the only other probable alternative.

in the King's camps. The four divisions of the Royalist army met, with mutual congratulations; and as, before the battle of Bradock Down, Hopton and Grenville had offered up solemn prayers at the head of each division, so, now, public thanksgiving for the victory and deliverance was made on the summit of the hill. To the Rev. Henry Wilson, Rector of Buckland Filleigh, who attended as chaplain of the army and waited on Sir Bevill to congratulate him after the victory, the soldier piously and politely replied that it was more owing to the parson's good prayers than to anything else.¹

"Had the Trayned-band men," says a contemporary reporter on the Parliamentary side, who seems to have had special opportunities of knowing the circumstances—"stood to it as well as the Volunteers, though their want of Horse was a great disadvantage, they had doubtless got the day."²

The flight of the defeated Parliamentarians must have been down the north-eastern slope of the hill, whence they would at once have reached a high-road leading into North Devon. The pursuit appears to have been kept up by a party of Digby's cavalry for only a mile or two, the Royalists contenting themselves with the success already achieved, and being somewhat apprehensive of the still undeveloped movement of Sir George Chudleigh's strong body of Horse in their rear.

Sir Bevill Grenville's local celebrity and the fame

¹ Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*, pt. ii. p. 392.

² *A Continuation of Certain Speciall and Remarkable Passages, &c.*, May 18-25, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cvi.

of his chivalric bravery had earned him a prominent place in connection with this victory ; it has not been given to every military hero to fight a pitched battle in the parish next to his own. It may be doubted if this is not a little too conspicuous in the inscription on a tablet placed on the battle-field by his grandson, Lord Lansdowne, and since affixed to the front of the Tree Inn at Stratton, in which the "signal overthrow" of the Rebels is exclusively attributed to the "valor of Sir Bevill Grenville" and the Cornish Army.

The defeat of the Parliamentarians was probably due in a great measure to their inferior discipline, their want of coherence, and finally perhaps to the loss of their immediate commander. Major-General James Chudleigh was openly charged by the Earl of Stamford, his chief, with having treacherously deserted to the enemy in the heat of the fight, and thus to have been the cause of the disaster. We have seen that he was taken prisoner. The point has never been made quite clear. Lord Clarendon, who could not praise Chudleigh's "excellent parts and courage" highly enough, repudiated the "scandal," as he termed it, and asserted that it was not until after Chudleigh had been some days a prisoner that he recovered his loyalty and entered the King's service. However this may have been, it is, of course, a question whether the circumstance of Chudleigh's wavering state of mind may not have influenced the result of the battle, although the obstinacy of the defence from five o'clock in the morning until three in the afternoon seems to

forbid the supposition of Chudleigh's deliberate treachery.

Sir George Chudleigh, who on receiving news of the defeat at Stratton hastily retreated to Plymouth, also went over to the opposite party soon afterwards, issuing a strikingly plausible manifesto to his countrymen when doing so. Perhaps he prematurely thought that the game of the Parliament was already played out, or he had discovered, as many others did later, that he was helping to exchange one sort of tyranny for another. Anyhow, he got little more for his pains than the nickname of the "Grand Ambo-dexter," and for his exceeding delinquency his estate afterwards suffered heavily. James Chudleigh was killed a few months later, fighting on the Royalist side at the siege of Dartmouth.¹

The Earl of Stamford, according to Lord Clarendon, whose allusions to the Earl are the reverse of complimentary, "stood at a safe distance all the time of the battle, environed by all the Horse," which, although "not above six or seven score, might have done great mischief" if properly employed. Some of the Parliamentarians, he adds, threw away their arms, others fled, dispersing themselves, and every man shifting for himself, their General giving the example."²

¹ Prince erroneously states that this was at the second siege in 1646 by Fairfax.

² *History of the Rebellion*, p. 424 b. The insinuations made by Lord Clarendon seem never to have been directly assailed. But, indirectly and quite incidentally, it was completely refuted at the time by a competent witness, a Devonshire gentleman of good repute, who was

Hals, a Cornish antiquary who wrote at the beginning of last century, remarks—"The country people hereabout will tell you that the field where this battle was fought, being afterwards tilled to barley, produced sixty bushels of corn, Winchester measure, in every acre; the fertility whereof is ascribed to the virtue the lands received from the blood of the slain men and horses, and the trampling of their feet in this battle."¹ The searcher in quest of other local traditions of the fight will not be surprised to learn that King Charles himself was present on the occasion, or to be shown the bed in which he slept!

In the parish church of Poughill, half a mile from the battle-field, there is still to be seen, painted on a board affixed to the wall of the south aisle, a copy of the King's Letter of Thanks to the Inhabitants of Cornwall.

For this service Sir Ralph Hopton, in the following September, was created Baron Hopton of Stratton.

The "fitters of that broken Army"—to borrow the language of Bruno Ryves in his *Mercurius Rusticus*—

present during the battle. Colonel John Were, in a vindication of himself, written soon afterwards, and, of course, long before Lord Clarendon's calumny was published, recounting his own services, says—"I continued all the fight and came off with my generall who continued to the last, having I suppose not twenty men with him, when he fired with our assistance divers peeces of Ordnance upon the enemy" (*The Apologie of Colonell John Were In Vindication of his Proceedings since the beginning of this present Parliament*, London, printed in the year 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxxxv.)

¹ Davies Gilbert's *Parochial History of Cornwall*, iv. 14.]

streamed back over Devonshire. Most of the Militiamen probably found shelter in the garrison towns, others returned to their homes ; but they were never again organized as a field force. The Earl of Stamford retreated by Barnstaple to Exeter,¹ attended, it may be presumed, by the remnant of his body-guard. His welcome at the former place if not cordial was generous, as the following item in the *Records* indicates :—

Paid for entertaining the Earl of Stamford
on two occasions £10 0 0²

The other occasion must have been previously—whether on his advance to Stratton or earlier there is nothing to show.

Captain Freeman and others—meaning, as I understand it, his subordinate officers, as the same circumstances apply to all of them—after receiving many wounds, were taken prisoners in the battle, “lost money, horses and apparel, and, though very weak, were compelled to march on foot to Truro and were there long kept close prisoners in a lamentable condition, till at last some by escape and some by exchange got to Barnstaple.”³

The exultation of the Cornish Royalists is shown in the following letter, written after receiving the news of the victory, by Mr. Francis Basset, of Tehidy, to his wife then at St. Michael's Mount, of which he was governor. It is apparent that to the writer the war seemed already over :—

¹ Rushworth, v. 272.

² No. lxii.

³ *Historical MSS. Commission, Fifth Report*, App., p. 1096.

TRURO, *this 18th May 1643*, 6 o'clock,
ready to march.

DEAREST SOULE,

Oh, dear soule, prayse God everlastingly. Reade this enclosed, ringe out the bells, rayse bonfyres, publish these joyfull tydings. Believe these truths, excuse my writing larger, I have no tyme ; wee march on to meete o' victorious friends, and to seaze all the rebells left, if wee can finde such livinge. Your dutyous prayers God hass heard. Bless us accordingly, pray everlastingly, and Jane, and Betty, and all you owne. Thy owne,

FRS. BASSET.

Pray let my cousin Harry know these joyful blessings. Send word to the ports south and north, to searche narrowly for all strangers travellinge for passage, and cause the keepinge them close and safe.

*To my dearest, dearest friend, Mrs. Basset, att the Mount.
Speede this, haste, haste.*¹

One of the earliest acts of the victors of Stratton, was the arbitrary assumption of authority which is evidenced by the following Letter of marque, issued in the names of the leaders of the Royalist army, with the object of crippling the maritime resources of the port towns, more particularly those of Devonshire, which were still held for the Parliament. This document was printed by order of the House of Commons, evidently for the purpose of showing up the proceedings of the Royalists. The following is a copy :—

Warwicke, Lord Mohun, Baron of Okehampton ; Sir
Ralph Hopton, knight of the Bath ; Sir John Barkeley,

¹ Printed in Polwhele's *Traditions and Recollections*, 1826, i. 17.

knight; and William Ashburnham esquire, or any two of them Commissioners authorized under the great seal of England, in the absence of William Marques of Hertford, to command all his Majesties forces in the West. To George Chappell of Topesham Merchant.

We doe hereby nominate, authorise, and appoynt you George Chappell to bee Captaine and chiefe commander of a ship called the Hope of Topesham, requiring you with all diligence and expedition to endeavour the furnishing and compleating of her with men, victuall, and ammunition, as also with tackell and furniture, fit for a voyage to sea, commanding all inferiour officers, souldiers, mariners, and seamen, under your command in the said ship and vessell to obey you as their Captaine, according to this Commission, authorizing you to set to sea at any time, and as often as you in your discretion shall thinke fit, for the space of six moneths next ensuing. And during the said time to apprehend seise and take for his Majesties service all such Shipps, barques, and vessels as doe belong to the Citties, towns, and ports of London, Exeter, Hull, Portsmouth, Dartmouth, Barnestable, Bideford, and Plimmouth, or to any of them, or to any other Cities, Townes, or Ports of this kingdome of England now in Rebellion against his Majestie, or to the inhabitants of the same or any of them : And the same to carry or bring into any of his Majesties Ports or harbours within the Countie of Cornwall. That the said shipp, or goods so taken by you, together with the Merchants, Officers, Masters and Seamen may be proceeded against according to the lawes of this Land; giving you also full power and authority in case of resistance to kill and slay all such as shall resist you in the execution of this your commission. And you are likewise to observe and follow such orders and directions as from time to time you shall receive from us. Given under our hands and

seales at Honyton the first day of June Anno Domini
1643.

WARWICK MOHUN,
RALPH HOPTON,
JOHN BERKELEY.¹

Although the authorities of Barnstaple had now more reason than ever to apprehend an attack upon the town, and "surprisalls and attempts against the same" were actually expected, they did not lose heart and there is no suggestion of panic. In the gravity of the situation further precautions were, however, considered necessary, and on the 30th of May, at a public meeting of the inhabitants, a new "Counsell of Warr" was appointed to concert further measures for the defence of the town and to provide against any sudden emergency. A minute of the resolution is recorded in the "Remembrance Book" as follows:—

1643, May 30th. It is this present daye att a generall meetinge agreed that there shalbe a Counsell of Warr chosen for the orderinge of martiall affaires within this towne duringe these troublesome tymes, and the pties soe to be chosen of the towne as Mr. Will^m Palmer, Maior, Mr. Geo. Peard, Esq^r, Recorder, Mr. Henry Masson, Mr. Alex^r Horwood, Mr. Rich. Harris, and Mr. Willm. Nottle, and of strangers, Mr. Hugh Fortescue, Esquire,² Collonel

¹ *A Letter of Mart*, London, July 25, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos., vol. cxviii.

² Of Wear-Giffard; second son of Hugh Fortescue of Wear-Giffard, Esq., (who died 1600) by Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Chichester of Raleigh, Kt. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Coffin of Portledge, Esq., in 1623, and died without leaving any issue in 1650.

Chudleigh,¹ Collonel Rolls, Livetennte Collonel Stevenson,² and Capt. Bennett, the major parte of whom psent shall from tyme to tyme have power to order and determine what shalbe necessary to be done for the defence of the towne, and yf there shalbe instant occasion to alter any of the forenamed psons that then by the common counsell of the towne shalbe chosen in the roome of such pson soe to be altered another, wch Counsell of Warr are to meete once a daye att nyne of the clocke in the morninge, the first meetinge to be on Tuesday next, unless extraordinary occasion present a necessity of speedier meetinge.

This Council practically superseded the Committee appointed in the month of October previously, Mr. William Nottle being the only one who was retained. The municipal sheep had been already so well shorn that it is a marvel that any wool was still left. But on the question of ways and means the Corporation, a fortnight later, passed a resolution extending their powers of alienating the town property and the lands of the Bridge Feoffees (now for the first time assailed). They also authorized the sale of reversionary leases, for the purpose of indemnifying members of the Corporation and others who had engaged for the repayment of loans raised

Mr. Fortescue was not a Member of Parliament, but took the Parliamentary side. He was not, however, an active partisan, although he contributed largely in money to the cause, as we shall presently see. He appears to have been successful in assuming an outward attitude of neutrality, as on the King's coming into Devonshire, in 1644, he obtained a letter of protection, under the King's hand, which is still preserved at Castle Hill.

¹ The defection of the Chudleighs was of course not then known.

² Of Lieutenant-Colonel Stevenson, I know nothing. His name does not again occur.]

for the purpose of further strengthening the defences of the town. If this resource failed, some other course should be taken to make good the deficiency. Among those who now advanced the principal sums were the following :—

			£	s.	d.
Hugh Fortescue, Esqr.	...	...	400	0	0
Mr. George Peard	...	...	50	0	0
Mr. Richard Beaple	...	...	60	0	0
Mr. Pentecost Doddridge	...	...	40	0	0 ¹

The three latter contributed the sums set against their names, in addition to those which they had lent in the previous October.

Some slackness in the fulfilment of the engagements made by sundry of the inhabitants was the occasion of the following threat, characteristic of the period, which was launched by the Corporation against possible defaulters :—

Yf any of the said pyties who have soe p'mised or subscribed shall refuse to enter into bond accordinge to his said p'mise and understandige that such p'sn or p'sns soe refusing shall be taken and declared to be adversaries to the King and Parliam^t the libtyes of the subject and professed enemys to the good and welfare of this towne and of the inhabitants thereof.²

In London the fever of Puritan zeal and fanaticism was at this time rising rapidly. Cheapside Cross had been demolished—"a Troop of Horse and two Com-

¹ "Remembrance Book."

² *Ibid.*, under date June 27, 1643.

panies of Foot waiting to see it done, and at the fall of the Top Cross, Drums beat, Trumpets blew, and a great shout was made : Charing Cross and all other Crosses in and about London were pulled down about the same time." ¹ "On May 10," says William Lithgow, "I saw at noone day two great heaps of books burned both where the golden crosse formerly stood and before the Royall Exchange, which books had been compyled by the popish prelatieall faction." ² London was being hastily fortified and this is the remarkable scene described by the same observer :—

The daily musters and showes of all sorts of Londoners here were wondrous commendable in marching to the fields and out-works (as merchants, silkmen, mercers, shop-keepers, &c.) with great alacritie, carrying on their shoulders yron mattocks and wooden shovels ; with roaring drummes flying colours, and girded swords ; most companies being also interlarded with ladies women and girles, two and two carrying baskets, for to advance the labour where divers wrought till they fell sick of their pains. All the trades and whole inhabitants . . . went, day about, to all quarters, for the erection of their forts and trenches ; and this hath continued these four months past. ³

The pressure of Parliamentary taxation for the support of the war increased in severity. An Ordinance of a very sweeping character was passed on the 1st of April, 1643, sequestering the estates, as well real as personal, of the bishops ; of all who had been in arms against the Parliament ; and of all who had volun-

¹ R. Burton's *Wars*, &c., p. 88.

² *The Present Surveigh of London*, &c., 1643, Somers's Tracts, iv. 536.

³ *Ibid.*

tarily contributed to any force, or had entered into any association against the Parliament. The net was a wide one, and this does not exhaust the calendar of delinquency. A committee of sequestrators was appointed for each county, with extraordinary powers for carrying the Ordinance into effect. Those for Devonshire were—Sir George Chudleigh, Sir John Pole, Sir John Northcote, Sir Francis Drake, baronets; Sir Edmund Fowell, Sir Samuel Rolle, Sir Shilston Calmady, Sir Nicholas Martin, knights; Robert Savery, Henry Walrond, Francis Rous, Edmund Prideaux, Henry Worth, Hugh Fortescue, Arthur Upton, John Yeo, William Frye, George Trobridge, esquires; The Mayor of Plymouth for the time being, and Mr. John Waldon.¹

The regular weekly assessments ordered in February had failed to bring in the expected supplies. Even the partisans of the Parliament were now subjected to an additional turn of the screw. Another Ordinance of Parliament of the 7th of May, 1643, appointed Committees in the several counties for speedy raising money throughout the whole kingdom, by taxing those who had not contributed or had not done so according to their estates and abilities. It provided for assessing and collecting from all possessing £10 a year in land or yearly profit, or £100 in personalty, to the extent of one-fifth of their yearly revenue or 1-20th of the value, to be paid by collectors

¹ *All the severall Ordinances and Orders made by the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament; concerning Sequestering the Estates of Delinquents, Papists, Spyes and Intelligencers, &c.* London, Printed for Edward Husbands, 1644.

of the several parishes to the Treasurer at Guild Hall, London, before the 24th of June. Distress if necessary on refusal, with power to force, &c. Payments made in accordance with this demand within ten days, to be "repaid upon the publick faith in such sort as moneys let upon the Propositions aforesaid are to bee repaid." ¹

At the beginning of May the main bodies of the two armies which had fought at Edgehill were still lying in their winter quarters. The King was at Oxford surrounded by his troops, who were sadly in want of necessities, especially of ammunition. The Parliamentary general, Essex, lay at Reading, which garrison had just surrendered to him after an ineffectual attempt of the King to relieve it. Messages with a view to a treaty between the rival powers were still going to and fro. Sir William Waller, with a force of two thousand Horse and dragoons detached from the Parliamentary army, had made a rapid and brilliant march through the South-western Counties, had successively reduced several strong towns, crossed the Severn, and annihilated the "mushroom army," as Lord Clarendon calls it, which the Earl of Worcester had raised on the Welsh side of the river.

After the battle of Stratton, the news of which appears to have created considerable sensation at the headquarters of both the King and the Parliament, Waller, who was then at Bristol, was ordered by the Earl of Essex "to proceed at once with all haste to Devonshire with his forces" to suppress Sir Ralph

¹ Husbands's Collection, p. 169.

Hopton. On the other hand, Sir Ralph, by an express from Oxford, was advised of the advance of Prince Maurice ¹ and the Marquess of Hertford into Somersetshire, and directed to co-operate with them. Their business was to resist Waller, whose orders seem to have been known, and who, it was expected, would be reinforced by the defeated Parliamentarians who had escaped from the battle of Stratton. Waller and Hopton had been old friends and comrades.

According to Lord Clarendon, Sir Ralph Hopton had been uncertain, after his victory at Stratton, whether to attack Plymouth or Exeter, or both; but the peremptory orders from Oxford for the concentration of the Royalist forces determined his advance into Somersetshire at once. A small detachment was left in the neighbourhood of Plymouth for the protection of Cornwall. The garrison of Barnstaple was probably considered too isolated to be taken into account. Exeter, into which the Earl of Stamford

¹ Prince Maurice, who was brought into relation with the governing authority of Barnstaple at a later period, was one of the sons of the Princess Elizabeth, sister of Charles I. and wife of the unfortunate Frederick, Prince Palatine and sometime King of Bohemia. On the breaking out of the Civil War he came over to England with his elder brother, the more brilliant soldier Prince Rupert, to place his sword at the service of his uncle, and was at once given a high command. The brothers corresponded in English—their mother's tongue. Prince Maurice was at this time twenty-two years of age. He was phlegmatic and arbitrary in temperament and unpopular as an officer. Schooled in the military gymnasium of the Low Countries, and in a war of dynastic interests and religious differences, carried on by professional and mercenary soldiers in utter disregard of the sufferings of civilians, he permitted a license in his English quarters which was intolerable.

had thrown himself with the wreck of his army, was watched by a small force which garrisoned Columb John. Within the city there was a considerable Royalist element which appears to have paralyzed the garrison.

Hopton reached Chard about the middle of June with above 3,000 Foot, 500 Horse, 300 dragoons and four or five field-pieces, and there met Prince Maurice whose forces were somewhat less in number. The march of Hopton's victorious army had been characterized, as might be supposed, by instances of plundering and license which now began to be common. Here is a case which crops up in the homely diary of a Devonshire yeoman :—

There came in at Credition of Cornishmen some four ether five thousand and did Riefell and take away many mens goods from Mat Buegingame and M^r John Rowe M^r Throw Bridge M^r Prouse M^r Boulton M^r Rogers M^r Young with others to the vallue of one thousand pounds and a half and upwards by relayton of others.¹

Lord Clarendon states that "very many" of the Parliamentary officers and men who had been taken prisoners at Stratton had joined Hopton's army.² A general advance of the Royalist Forces then took place to Taunton, which with Bridgwater and Dunster Castle, was at once surrendered to them. Sir Ralph Hopton was returning to Exeter when,

¹ "Extracts from a Memorandum Book belonging to Thomas Roberts and Family of Stockleigh Pomeroy," *Trans. Devonshire Association*, x. 325.

² *History of the Rebellion*, p. 426 a.

learning that Sir William Waller was in force at Bath, he turned to meet him. The progress of the Royalists was arrested at Wells by a body of Parliamentary troops, partly from Somersetshire, partly those sent out of Exeter on the apprehension of a siege, and partly "the remainder of those Horse and dragoons that escaped out of Cornwall after the battle of Stratton,"¹ and the first that had since made a stand. This force stubbornly contested the ground but, after a series of sharp cavalry skirmishes, was obliged to give way and retire within the lines of Sir William Waller, who was now posted with a newly recruited army at and about Bath.

On the 5th of July, the two armies met on the heights of Lansdown, and a fiercely contested but indecisive battle ensued, in which the Cornish Royalists distinguished themselves by their valour, and the gallant Sir Bevill Grenville was killed.² On the whole, the advantage remained with the Parliamentarians. A few days later Sir William Waller, while slowly following up his doubtful success, was defeated and crushed, on Roundaway Down, near Devizes, by a sudden and haphazard attack given by Lord Wilmot who had come out of Oxford with fifteen hundred of the King's Horse to the support of the Western army. There the last remnant of

¹ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 428 b. Meaning probably the Horse and dragoons lately under Sir George Chudleigh's command.

² It is stated that the Royalist Colonel John Gifford, of Brightley, "commanded the Devon Pikemen at the battle of Landsdown" (Vivian's *Visitations of Devon*, i. 400). Lord Clarendon's statement (p. 189) may explain the fact of these men being on the Royalist side.

ANOTHER EXPEDITION FROM BARNSTAPLE. 191

the Devonshire Horse, after witnessing the repulse of Hazlerig's cuirassiers, turned with the rest of the Parliamentary cavalry and dispersed. On the 24th of July, Bristol was invested on one side by Hopton and his Cornishmen and by Prince Rupert, who had marched from Oxford with a large force of cavalry, infantry, and siege artillery, on the other. On the 26th, the city was simultaneously stormed on both sides and thereupon capitulated, and this important success secured for some time the ascendancy of the King's cause in the West.

Having seen what became of the scattered remains of the defeated Devonshire Army, it will now be time to return to the garrison of Barnstaple which, meanwhile, had not remained entirely inactive ; for in the month of July it again took the field. The incident is thus briefly referred to in the Summary :—

For setting forth 400 foote and 70 horse to beate off the enemy in Southmolton, with money and victualls, 17th July 1643, 2 daies £40 0 0

It is not easy to throw any further light upon the object of this expedition, or to discover its results, if there were any. It will be remembered that the northern part of the county had been absolutely denuded of Royalist troops after the battle of Stratton. The detached force which remained watching Exeter, although stated by the Royalist historian to have been numerically weak, had kept

the neighbouring country in a state of terror as yet new to the people. In these "alarums and excursions" Sir James Hamilton's regiment of Horse and dragoons, which formed part of that force, committed such excesses that it had to be exchanged lest its license should weaken the influence of the King's party. Sir John Berkeley, who had turned the tide of fortune at a critical moment at the battle of Stratton, was consequently sent back from the army, then at Wells, with Col. Howard's regiment of Horse, to take the place of Hamilton's, and with instructions to raise whatever forces he could in the county for the purpose of blockading Exeter. Upon this work Berkeley was now engaged. In the third week of July he is found defending Topsham from an attack of a Parliamentary squadron under the Earl of Warwick which had entered the Exe with the object of relieving Exeter.¹ In this aspect of affairs the advance of an enemy upon Barnstaple from that quarter would seem to have been highly improbable.

However, according to the information at the Royalist quarters, the north parts of Devonshire had "gathered apace into a head for the Parliament" and were "notoriously disaffected." Berkeley therefore detailed Colonel John Digby (who, it will be remembered, was already familiar with the country) to proceed into North Devon with his regiment of Horse and "some loose troops of dragoons," for the purpose of preventing a junction of the North Devon rebel forces with those of Plymouth intended, it was

¹ See *Notes and Gleanings*, Exeter, i. 153.

supposed, for the relief of Exeter.¹ As a matter of fact, Parliamentary intelligence from Plymouth reported that two thousand men had been raised there and at Dartmouth, who had taken Flete, driven the Cavaliers from Totnes, and were marching towards Exeter, hoping to meet other forces from Barnstaple and the northern parts of Devon to join with them in that expedition.² Whatever may have been the scheme thus concerted, that it led to nothing is sufficiently known.³ It was probably the advance of Digby's force, the intention or destination of which was not apparent to the garrison of Barnstaple, but which anyhow threatened it, that drew out the party from the town on the 17th of July, and led to the two days' expedition to South Molton which is noted in the Summary.

An obscure and entirely unsupported item of intelligence which occurs in one of the London diurnals of this period seems to refer to another and subsequent expedition of which there is no account in our local guide, the Summary. It is as follows :—

Aug. 15. Out of Devonshire it is informe that the Inhabitants of Barnstable, Beddyford and Torrington, in the North part of that County, are joyned in a body, and are gone into Cornwall, and that they intend to seize upon the houses, estates and goods of such of the Cornish Cavaliers

¹ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 453 b.

² *Certain Informations*, &c., No. 26, July 10-17, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cxvii.

³ This was apparently the expedition under the command of Sir Alexander Carew to which Berkeley alludes as having been repulsed (see his letter printed in *Notes and Gleanings*, i. 154).

as now besiege Excester, endeavouring by that meanes to draw them from that City, to looke to the safety of their owne substances at home : which Policie was heretofore used by the Romans to draw Hanniball out of Italy, when he had almost wasted and overrunne it.¹

This must have happened, if at all, very early in August at the latest, because, as will presently appear, the passage of such a force from North Devon into Cornwall would soon afterwards have been barred by a strong Royalist force on its path. The same diurnal reports the following further information of two days' later date in reference to this expedition :—

Aug. 17. Out of the West it is informed that the Devonshire Forces which went lately into Cornwall, to seize upon the estates of those Cornish men that besiege Excester (in hope to draw them from thence) are againe retired into their own County, without effecting much to their purpose, because the whole power of the County of Cornwall rose against them, so that their numbers being farre unequall to the Cornish strength, they were forced to give over their designe, and returne to their own homes againe.²

There is, so far as I am aware, and as I have already implied, no other account of the alleged expedition. The fact, however, would not have been inconsistent with the evident determination of the Parliamentarians of North Devon to carry on the war locally with the utmost vigour.

¹ *Certaine Informations*, &c., No. 31, Aug. 14-21, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cxxii.

² *Certaine Informations*, &c., *ibid.*

Colonel Digby, whose flying column, notwithstanding Lord Clarendon's previous statement, could not have consisted, upon the historian's own subsequent showing, of many more than two hundred Horse and dragoons, reached Torrington without, so far as we know, having fallen in with the detachment from the garrison of Barnstaple which had sallied out on the 17th of July in the direction of South Molton, or with the combined force which is stated to have attempted the raid upon the Cornish Cavaliers. A passage in Lord Clarendon's *History* implies that this happened within a few days after the fall of Bristol.¹ That was on the 26th of July; the occupation of Torrington may therefore be approximately set down as having taken place about the 1st of August. Within the next fortnight it appears that Digby received an addition to his strength of a troop of Horse and a regiment of Foot raised in Cornwall, bringing up his force to above three hundred Horse and six or seven hundred Foot.²

The presence of Colonel Digby's force at Torrington was a menace to the Parliamentarians of Barnstaple and Bideford who, with more boldness than discretion, resolved, in the phraseology of the time, to try their fortune by beating up the Royalist quarters, instead of waiting for an attack. With this object, a combined expedition was planned and carried out by the troops which garrisoned the two towns. Lord Clarendon, who is not always to be relied upon in such a particular, exaggerated when he

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 442 a.

² *Ibid.*, p. 453 b.

estimated the number of the confederates as superior to that of Digby's force, and to have amounted to above 1,200 Foot and 300 Horse. We know from our local record, which is more trustworthy than the Royalist historian's estimate, that the garrison of Barnstaple actually furnished only 370 Foot and 130 Horse;¹ and the Bideford contingent, the strength of which is not known, was almost certainly smaller in number. It is doubtful if the whole force exceeded 500 Foot and 200 Horse. Captain Bennet, whose company was one of those which garrisoned Barnstaple, was in chief command of the expedition, and Captain Freeman led the Barnstaple cavalry.

Watkins, the author of the *Essay towards a History of Bideford* (1792), with transparent antipathy to the Puritans, embellished his paraphrase of Lord Clarendon's narrative with the probably gratuitous observation that if the Parliamentarians had not "wasted their time in preaching and praying and seeking the Lord" they might have attacked Digby with more advantage before he had received his reinforcements. The postulate, at least, seems indisputable.

A surprise seems to have been intended; but some Royalist in Barnstaple succeeded in giving Colonel Digby timely intelligence of the enterprise the night before it took place. Lord Clarendon has preserved in a quotation the very words of the traitorous communication—"that the forces drew out thence to

¹ As the number of Horse quartered in Barnstaple at this time is stated in the Summary to have been only seventy, it seems that another troop was mounted, or called in, perhaps for this particular service.

Bideford in the night, and that they intended to fall on his quarters early in the morning."¹

The road by which the Barnstaple troops marched to join their allies at Bideford diverges only slightly from the more direct road from Barnstaple to Torrington. The length of this first stage was rather more than eight miles. From Bideford to Torrington it was about six miles farther.

The hill upon which the town of Torrington stands is, on the south side, almost a precipice, rising to the height of about 300 feet, from the right bank of the river Torridge. On the north side of the town it slopes, at first steeply, but afterwards more gradually, towards a shallow valley, opening, a mile farther west, into that of the Torridge. Down this slope for half a mile extends a road, now called Church Lane, in most places deeply cut into the soil, which leaves one of the main thoroughfares of the town opposite the parish church, and is, in fact, the old road to Bideford. The ground on each side of this road is enclosed, and was no doubt much the same at the time of the incidents to be described as it is now. For some distance eastward of the point where the road reaches the bottom of the slope a thick bank, or hedge, extends longitudinally up the valley, forming the boundary of the enclosed land on this side of it. On the opposite side of the valley the ground rises less steeply in almost an amphitheatrical form. It is a piece of rough moorland, sprinkled with furze-bushes, and is known partly as Norwood Common and partly as Fisher's

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 453 b.

Down. The extent of the actual open waste is evidently less than it was in the seventeenth century, some of it having been since enclosed. On the higher ground are the cultivated fields of the farm belonging to the old manor-house of Norwood. The open common is intersected by three roads which, converging, fall into Church Lane before mentioned, where it reaches the bottom of the valley. The middle one is the old road from Bideford.

Colonel Digby, having been apprised, as we have seen, of the intended attack upon his position, drew up his forces on the hillside below the town, lining the hedges with his Foot, and placing the Horse in the enclosures. He had broken gaps in the fences through which the cavalry could freely operate. Here he remained in expectation of the coming of the Parliamentarians until noon, when the scouts who had been sent out having "returned with assurance that there was no appearance of an enemy," he "believed they had given over their design; and so dismissed his Horse to their several quarters reserving only one hundred and fifty upon their guard and returned himself into the town with the Foot."¹

Thus far Lord Clarendon. But the *Mercurius Aulicus* of August 20-26,² printed at Oxford, in an account purporting to have been written by "a gentleman who was an actor in the business," states that Colonel Digby advanced with four troops of Horse four miles out of the town, where he made

¹ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 453 b.

² Burney Collection, B. M., vol. ii., No. 13.

a stand for eight or nine hours. There being no appearance of the rebels, the troops were then retired to their quarters in the town. This may refer to a reconnaissance earlier in the morning.

About two o'clock in the afternoon an alarm came in that the enemy was within half a mile of the town. In the midst of some confusion the Royalist Foot was hastily placed in the best manner possible "upon the avenues" (presumably the streets and lanes which converged on both sides of the churchyard upon the Bideford road); Sir James Colebrand's dragoons lined the hedges nearest the town; and Colonel Digby himself hurried off to the Horse which had been left on guard outside. Then he discovered the enemy, with their cavalry in front, drawn up on the common which faced his own position in the enclosures.

"The Colonel . . . intended rather to look upon them than to engage with them before his other troops came up." In the meantime he "divided his small party of Horse, the whole consisting but of one hundred and fifty, into several parties, and distributed them into several little closes out of which there were gaps into the larger ground upon which the enemy stood."¹

We will now return, for a moment, to the proceedings of the Parliamentarians.

The military tactics of that period are usually styled simple. In this case the enterprise of the combined Barnstaple and Bideford forces was not merely simple, but obviously foolhardy. To assault,

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, pp. 453 a-453 b.

and by a direct front attack, a force numerically superior, as Digby's undoubtedly was, and occupying a position admirably capable of defence, was, to say the least of it, hazardous. These very men, it is true, had distinguished themselves by their bravery at Modbury ; but over-confidence in themselves and bad generalship led to the results not unfrequently to be met with in the pages of English military history.

The main body of Parliamentary forces which, according to the circumstantial information sent to Colonel Digby, had marched out of Barnstaple at night, must have needed rest and refreshment when they reached Bideford. Whatever may have been the concerted plan, there was not much likelihood of their forming a junction with the Bideford contingent, advancing at once, reaching Torrington, more than fourteen miles by this route from their starting-point, and surprising the Royalists at day-break on an August morning. Delay inevitably intervened. It was not until past noon, as we have learnt, that the whole body was discovered passing over the brow of the hill at Norwood and forming on the common opposite Digby's position ; the infantry composed chiefly of pike-men, drawn up, as was usual, in a solid phalanx, with musketeers on their flanks, and supported by two field pieces ; the small force of Horse, as the account tells us, in the van.

"A forlorn hope of fifty musketeers" of the Parliamentarians (to continue Lord Clarendon's narrative), "advanced towards that ground where himself [Digby] was ; and if they had recovered the

hedge they would easily have driven him thence. And therefore as the only expedient left, himself taking four or five officers into the front with him charged that forlorn hope ; which immediately threw down their arms and run upon their own body, and . . . without making a stand, or their horse offering once to charge, the whole body routed themselves and fled.”¹ The account in the *Mercurius Aulicus* is not materially different from Lord Clarendon’s.

To the present writer who, one clear day in early autumn, stood on the ground occupied by the Parliamentarians, which may be indicated by the position of the 14th milestone from Barnstaple, the whole scene, to the mind’s eye, could be perfectly realized. The “forlorn,” or advanced party of fifty musketeers, feeling their way towards the hedge which has been described as running longitudinally up the valley at the bottom of the opposite slope, to attack the small parties of the enemy’s Horse which were discernible in the fields beyond—the sudden rush of the Cavaliers, led by Digby himself, imitating the tactics of Prince Rupert, out of the little enclosures farther up the valley, through gaps which almost seemed still visible in the hedgerows, taking them in flank and throwing them back in

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 454 a. Gribble (*Memorials of Barnstaple*, p. 449) assumes from Lord Clarendon’s description of the engagement that the whole Parliamentarian force was routed by Colonel Digby and five of his officers ! This may be a permissible, but is not, I venture to think, the right, interpretation even of the historian’s meaning. The account in the *Mercurius Aulicus* allows the more reasonable inference that Digby made his onslaught at the head of about one hundred of his Horse.

confusion upon their main body—the general panic which ensued—and the pursuit of the broken force by the exultant Royalist troopers.

Our knowledge of the details of the conflict is derived from the two slightly varying accounts which I have used. What follows may be taken perhaps with a customary reservation; for the Royalist historian has generally little that is complimentary to say of the courage or military skill of his political opponents. In the action—for he will hardly call it a skirmish, much less a battle—Lord Clarendon states that “near two hundred were killed and above two hundred taken prisoners,” and that the remainder “were scattered and dispersed over all the country and scarce a man without a cut over the face and head or some other hurt;” and he indulges in the extravagant hyberbole that the swords of the pursuers “were blunted with slaughter.” He also intimates that the Divine interposition in favour of the Cavaliers was unconsciously acknowledged by those who escaped, inasmuch as they told strange stories of the horror and fear that seized upon them, although nobody had seen above six of the enemy that charged them.¹

The *Mercurius Aulicus* gives as the result of this action that 100 of the Parliamentarians were slain upon the spot, that 211 officers and common soldiers were taken prisoners, most of them miserably wounded; and that there were captured—2 field-pieces, 6 barrels of powder, 400 weight of bullet, 200 and a half of match, and above 300 arms.

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 454 a.

besides all the Foot-officers' horses. The rebel Horse, according to this authority, "ranne all away leaving their poore Foot to the mercy of the Conqueror: who having soone given order concerning the prisoners and the spoile, pursu'd the run-awayes to the very workes of Biddeford; but the night being now come on, he return'd victoriously, having lost in all this service but one man, the rest of his men not having bled so much as one drop all the day."¹

The record of this disastrous expedition occurs with characteristic brevity in the Summary:—

For setting forth 370 Souldiers and 130
Horse against Torrington, with money and
victuals 3rd August 1643 2 daies £80 0 0

Then, as a counterpart to this, the following item appears in the accounts of the Receiver of the Corporation for the year ending Michaelmas that year—the last account which has survived, of the period under notice—a confirmation of the sanguinary nature of the merciless cavalry charge which was the sequel of the affair. It is an allowance of

v^l. paid to Mr. Will^m Palmer [mayor] for soe much by him paid to Salisbury towards the curinge of the hurted soldiers att Torrington.

Captain Freeman returned to Barnstaple with the remains of his two troops of Horse to receive the

¹ *Mercurius Aulicus*, Aug. 20–26, 1643, Burney Collection, B. M., vol. ii., No. 13.

malediction or condolence of the authorities, as the case may have been. But he was treated not ungenerously. His dinner bills were discharged, and a gratuity was presented to him, as we find in the same account :—

viii/. xs. paid Richard Harris vintner for dyett & other charges for Captaine Freeman, And of vi/. more paid Captaine Freeman by the Approbation of the Maior Aldermen & others for his paynes & service done for this Towne.

Captain Freeman, whose name is not otherwise connected with Barnstaple, was probably one of those soldiers of fortune who had learnt the art of war amongst the mercenary forces employed in the Netherlands, and who, on the breaking out of the English Civil War, offered their services and valuable experience to one or other of the contending parties.

In the parish register of Torrington the following entry occurs among the burials in the month of August, 1643:—

Seaven of the militia men that came ag^t Torrington from Bideford & Barstable being slaine neare about norwood & the Comons were buried the xxth day.

There is recorded, in the month of September, the burial of a Parliamentarian, who, presumably, had been mortally wounded in the fight and had lived long enough to give his name :—

William Herman a souldyer of Pilton [Barnstaple] for the militia was buryed the iiijth day ;

also of a Royalist, in the same month :—

Brace Vawen [Vaughan ?] Chirurgion to Colonell Digby's Army was buryed the viijth day.

The precise date of the fight at Torrington has been involved in unnecessary confusion. Watkins, in his history of Bideford, categorically fixes it as the 2nd of September, for which there is no authority whatsoever, and which is irreconcilable with other authenticated circumstances. The inferences with which he follows up this assumption are therefore equally erroneous.

I am reluctant to question the strict accuracy of the dates in the Summary, having tested and proved their general trustworthiness ; but in this case the date of the expedition to Torrington, given as "3rd Aug," is certainly wrong. It was not until the end of July, as has been stated, that Digby reached Torrington, and he had been there long enough to be strengthened by additional troops from Cornwall before he was attacked. Besides, the burial of soldiers killed in the fight at Torrington, as recorded in the parish register, took place on the 20th of August—obviously too long afterwards not to raise the question. The true date seems to be fixed by the *Mercurius Aulicus*, in the number from which I have freely quoted. The news of the incident is there stated to have reached Oxford on Thursday the 24th of August. Allowing three days

for its transmission (which is ample), the letter containing it may have been written at Torrington on the previous Monday, and it mentions that the incident had happened on "last Saturday." There can be no reasonable doubt, therefore, that the Torrington fight took place on Saturday the 19th of August; and this is perfectly consistent with the date of the burial of seven of the slain recorded in the parish register. The "3rd August" of the Summary is manifestly an error—probably of a transcriber who read *iij* for *xix* in the original; a mistake into which, from my own personal knowledge of the caligraphy of the local records of the period, I should judge that it was easy to fall.

No time was lost by Colonel Digby in following up his advantage. He appears to have immediately threatened Bideford, and within two or three days after his victory, according to Lord Clarendon, a small fort or battery at Appledore, which commanded the navigable channel of the rivers Taw and Torridge at their confluence, was yielded up to him. It must have been at this time—at least it seems so to me judging from the whole wording of the following extract—that the authorities of Barnstaple helped their neighbours in the way which this item in the Summary shows:—

For money corne and powder sent to
Bideford to incourage them to hold out
against ye Seidge of Coll. Digby £200 0 0

These timely supplies were probably sent by water and so escaped the notice of the enemy. It is clear,

therefore, that the town of Bideford was in a position to make at least a show of defence. The front of the town rested on the wide tidal river Torridge. On the opposite bank a thin suburb, called East-the-Water, extended along the river-side, and was surmounted by Chudleigh's fort already mentioned. The entrances of the town proper were no doubt defended, and a small fort or redoubt had been thrown up on the top of the hill on the steep slope of which the town stands. Digby does not appear to have been provided with artillery, if we except the two pieces which fell into his hands at Torrington fight. The proceedings of the Barnstaple authorities may not have originated altogether in disinterested generosity. Bideford, as it were an outlying post, if it fell, would carry with it the command of the entrance of the river Taw, and cut off the access of Barnstaple to and from the sea.

As for Barnstaple itself, it is not unlikely that, as the full purport of the defeat before Torrington became known to the inhabitants, something of the nature of a panic set in. As is often the case, a contingent event, always possible, and carefully provided against, came at last as a surprise. In the imminent prospect of an assault from the enemy, the more likely if Bideford fell, the earthworks were, by order of the Corporation, hastily strengthened, and "gates" were erected, presumably at the most assailable entrance to the town on the south side, or for barricading the bridge. These additional precautions may be inferred from the following items of expenditure in the Receiver's account of the year :—

xiiij^s vi^d p^d Beniamyn Roweley for cuttinge of Turfe by M^r Thomas Cope his order.

l^a viij^s paid for Carriage of two & twenty boates of Turfes from the key.

And of v^s ij^d w^{ch} he paid unto John Witheridge for two peices of Tymber for beames for gates.

And of xvij^s paid Nicholas Symons for the Plowmans dyett that brought in the tymber for the gates.

The trifling incident of the provision of diet for the "plowmen" (*i.e.*, the drivers of teams) seems to suggest the urgency of the proceeding.¹

It will now be desirable to revert for a moment to the Royalist army which was left around Bristol after the surrender of that city. It was perceived that there were strong military reasons, after the defeat

¹ I think I am warranted in the inference which I have drawn from these details of expenditure in the Receiver's account of the year ending Michaelmas, 1643. The items relate, of course, to only a fraction of the whole defences of the town, and they have this peculiarity, that they contain the only record of payments with respect to the construction of fortifications occurring in the *Corporation* accounts, the extraordinary cost of these works having been met, as we have seen, from exceptional sources. Although the order of time in which the entries appear in the Receiver's accounts is not exactly to be depended upon, no monthly dates being ever mentioned, it is significant that these items are all mixed up indiscriminately at the end of the year's account with those already extracted relating to the losses at Torrington, and others consequent upon that disaster. They seem to belong, therefore, to this particular crisis. Had they appertained to the time when the first moderate scheme of the Corporation for fortifying the town was concocted, they would have occurred in the previous year's account; had they been connected with the defences of the town carried out in the interim, it is reasonable to assume that they would have been merged into the far larger expenditure-account, the full particulars of which have unfortunately not survived.

and dispersion of the Parliamentarians under Sir William Waller, and the series of successes which had been gained by the King's detached forces, for combining the whole of those forces for some decided movement. It is on record that the main cause of a different plan being adopted was the refusal of the Cornishmen, who had so brilliantly distinguished themselves in these operations, to advance any farther. They had lost their favourite leaders—Grenville, Slanning (who, by the way, was a Devonshire man), and Trevanion—and, if not discouraged, at all events, preferred to return to their own county.*

While the King in person, therefore, set out with his own immediate forces to prosecute the siege of Gloucester, then held for the Parliament by Colonel Massey, the Cornishmen, with some other local troops, were placed under the orders of Prince Maurice and the Earl of Carnarvon. The latter set out from before Bristol with about two thousand Horse and dragoons, and the former two days later with the Foot and artillery. These flying columns had no enemy in the field to meet; their business was to attack those fortified towns in Dorsetshire and Devonshire which still held out for the Parliament. Dorchester, the first assailed, at once capitulated, and Weymouth followed. The Royalist troops under the Prince were then indulged in such license that Lord Carnarvon threw up his command in disgust. Prince Maurice advanced to Lyme Regis, which

* Lord Clarendon intimates another reason—that of providing a suitable independent command for Prince Maurice! (*History of the Rebellion*, p. 442 b.)

"returned so peremptory a refusal to the Prince's summons that his highness resolved not to attack them."¹ He then marched with the whole force to Exeter, and, forming a junction with Sir John Berkeley, completely invested the city. This took place about the middle of August. For more than a month the Earl of Stamford, whose incapacity has been before alluded to, had suffered himself and a garrison more numerous and better supplied with means than the besieging force under Berkeley, to be shut up within the walls of Exeter, notwithstanding that a Parliamentary squadron under the Earl of Warwick had come up the Exe as far as Topsham to divert the attention of the besiegers. Apparently only one attempt in the way of a sortie had been made, when, after a useless fight, eighty prisoners are stated to have been taken from the enemy by the citizens.² But Lord Stamford, it seems, was playing a double game. So recently as the 4th of August he had written a letter to King Charles professing to be holding Exeter for *him* and for the preservation of peace.³

The steps leading to the fate of Exeter were almost coincident with those by which the fortunes of Barnstaple were now descending. To the former I can only incidentally refer. I return to North Devon

¹ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 453 a.

² *The Copie of a Letter sent from Exeter, &c.* (Davidson's *Bibliotheca Devoniensis*, p. 69).

³ *Calendar of Clarendon State Papers in the Bodleian Library*, No. 1,720.

and to the transactions which followed the disaster at Torrington. The few days which intervened between that disaster and its sequel were days, we may be sure, of intense anxiety and of great perplexity in Barnstaple. The Mayor, as virtually governor of the fortress, bore the burden of a grave responsibility. The news of the entry of a fresh Royalist army into the county may well have accentuated the alarm, if it did not, as Lord Clarendon puts it, bring "a new terror." But, in truth, the Parliamentary cause was at that time almost everywhere, but especially in the West, at a low ebb and in a critical condition. The common people were already tired of the war. "My countrymen," writes one at this time, "love their pudding at home better than a musket or pike abroad, and if they could have peace care not what side had the better."¹

After the first burst of the excitement, conspicuous in the hurried despatch of supplies to Bideford, had expended itself, despondency seems to have settled down on the spirits of the ruling authorities of Barnstaple. The first glimpse of what was passing in this interval is obtained from Oxford, where the following piece of intelligence was circulated under the date of August 29:—

It was this day signified from the West that Barnstaple and Biddeford being sensible of their own condition since the defeat given to their partizans: and (to say truth) to the whole body of the Forces, by that brave and Noble Colonell John Digby, of which you heard at large in the former

¹ Carte's *Original Letters*, &c., i. 21.

weeke ; and being utterly unable to repaire that losse, were upon treaty of Accommodation, with some of His Majesties Officers and Commanders in those parts of that County : and that there was nothing wanting to the settlement of a good accord, but the petulancy of Master Peard (that prudent, learned, and comely Gentleman) who did as much oppose it there as my Lord Say, or Pym, or Isaac Pennington¹ could doe, in any of the three Houses wherein they are leaders.²

In this passage the hand of Sir John Birkenhead, whose sarcasm enlivened the pages of the weekly news-sheet which he conducted for the delectation of the idlers about the Court, is discernible. The information, however, was undoubtedly authentic. Negotiations for the surrender of Barnstaple had been entered upon. On the very day, in fact, on which this print made its appearance at Oxford, the Corporation of the town were in debate on certain propositions which had been received from Prince Maurice, Commander of the King's forces in Devonshire. George Peard, it appears, was present, and, with unshaken faith in his cause, counselling further resistance—if any could be said to have been yet seriously offered. The Prince's letter was dated two days before from his head-quarters at Polsloe, one mile from Exeter. This summons or invitation, whichever it may be more appropriately called, was

[¹ Sir Isaac Pennington, Lord Mayor of London, who swayed the Civic Council as Say is supposed to have done the Lords, and Pym the Commons. George Peard's influence with the Barnstaple Corporation is here not obscurely girded at.]

² *Mercurius Aulicus*, Aug. 27-Sept. 1, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cxxiv.

evidently the result of a previous conference. The following is the exact text :—

To the Mayor & Corporation of Barstaple.

His Maties gracious disposition rather to reduce with Clemency his seduced Subiects, then wth severity to Cutt them off, & to drawe no bloud where milder remedies may worke y^e Cure, hath byn evidenced to y^e Kingdome in severall declaracions & pclamations : w^{ch} phaps have byn detayned from y^e sight of you or most of you (as in divers other places) by y^e practice of such as desired either to sowe or foment causeless iealousies agst their most gracious Sovereigne & desired to carry well meaning Subiects hoodwinkt wth faire but false ptences to y^e furthering of theyr owne secrett & unlawfull designes, though not without indangering y^e miserable ruyne both of Subiects and Kingdome. To open yo^r eyes, & to deliver you from these vinnst [?evinced] surmises of y^e Kings intençon to introduce Popery & arbitrary Governmt, I knowe not what clearrer and fuller security y^e subiect needs desire or y^e King is able to give then y^r his Mat^{ies} most solempne Protestation (extant in print) made at Oxford as hee was going to receyve y^e holy Sacram^t, wherein wth a sacred reverence hee publicuely pfessed, before y^e God of Heaven, and the Lords of his owne Court, y^t hee will to y^e death defend & maintayne y^e true protestant Religion as it was pfessed in y^e purest tymes of Queene Elizabeth, y^e iust Priviledges of Parliam^t, y^e Lawes of y^e Land, and y^e Libty & pperty of y^e subject.

W^{ch} declaration, together wth Gods Almighty assistance evidently demonstrated by y^e many late successes of his Mat^{ies} Forces both in y^e North & West, hath so farr prevailed wth many, that not onely y^e Earles of Holland, Bedford, Clare, and Lord Lovelace, but divers of the House of Compons have come in to his Mat^{ie}; & the Lords of

Northumberland, Pembroke and Salisbury have deserted y^e party, and are retyred from London : that there remayne in y^e House of Lords not above seven at y^e most, and of the Comons not y^e 5th parte. Nevertheles to psecute his Mat^{ies} sweete & mercifull intençons, & to pvent y^e effusion of his Subiects bloud, w^{ch} hee esteemeth as his owne, & to save his (formerly well governed) Towne from Calamity & ruyne, I declare to you in his Mat^{ies} name, y^e hee is ready to impute yo^r breach of duty & Loyalty hitherto unto others seducing yo^r hearts & yo^r mistaking his. And therefore if now to testify yo^r reall intençon to live hereafter in due obedience to his Mat^{ie} & y^e Lawes of y^e Land, & to submitt to y^e discipline of y^e Church of England established by Lawe, you shall forthwth, before or upon y^e last day of this instant moneth, disband and dismisse all yo^r extraordinary Forces, & abstayne from all Military actions not warranted by his Mat^{ies} authority,

I doe hereby pmise & undertake on myne Honor, in y^e words of a Prince,

1. That yee all, & y^e rest, who (at y^e date hereof) are wthin yo^r Walls or Jurisdicçon shall bee freely & fully pardoned.

2. That no man shall bee permitted to plunder or violate yo^r psons goods or estates.

3. That yo^r Towne shall bee left unto yo^r selves (free from any Garrison) to bee governed as formerly by y^e Mayo^r & his Brethren.

4. That you shall not bee burthened wth any Fines or extraordinary rates & taxes, but onely in a due pporçon wth y^e rest of y^e County.

MAURICE.

Given at my Quarter at Polesloe
the 27th of August, 1643.¹

¹ A Copy, Additional MSS., B. M., No. 18,980, f. 110.

The result of the deliberation of the Mayor and Corporation in this crisis of their affairs was the following reply to Prince Maurice's overture :—

To the Most Excellent Prince Maurice. The Humble Submission and thankfull acceptation of the Mayor & Corporaçon of Barstaple :

MOST NOBLE & VERTUOUS PRINCE.

On Monday Last towards y^e end of the day wee receyved y^e pledge of y^r Highnes Favor in y^e pposiçons of Peace, w^{ch} you were gratusly pleased to send unto us, both for o^r selves and all y^e rest who at y^e date of that writing were wthin our Walls or Jurisdicçon, & accordingly with the best & greatest expediçon wee could, wee did all meete aboute it the next Morning, where yo^r Highnes expressions of Grace were made knowne unto us ; & with all Humble & due respect considered of by us. The Close and upshott of all being this, our Cheerfull submission to what was therein required, & our thankefull acceptaçon of what is thereby granted unto us. May it please you therefore (Most Excellent Prince) to understand that (indeed) our intençons have alway beene, are now, & (by the grace of God) ever shall bee reall to Live in all due obedience to his Mat^{ie} and y^e Lawes of y^e Land, & to submitt to y^e discipline of the Church of England Established by Lawe : & y^t in testimony hereof, wee have already disbanded & dismissed all our extraordinary Forces, & shall certainly abstaine from all Military Actions not Warranted by His Maties Authority : & thereupon doe now Most Humbly beseech, that your Highnes offers of Grace (under y^{or} supposall of these things pformed) may come freely & effectually to us wth that Fulness of Confirmaçon w^{ch} the Cause requireth, & yo^r Noble Justice shall direct ; and y^t his Maties Forces in these

parts may bee certified of these things in such a way that (wthout any theyr Lett or Molestaçon) wee may enjoy y^e fruite & Comforte of this blessed Reconciliaçon. And wee according to our bounden duety shall alway pray unto y^e God of Heaven for his blessings in all kinds to rest upon y^e person of our Deare Sovraigne, his Royall Consort, theyr Royall Issue, and y^e Noble Princes of his blood, amonge whom yo^r Highnes is so endeared to us, that we shall account it a good parte of our Happines to finde the oportunity of manifesting our selves such as wee doe p^rfesse our selves really to bee, Yo^r Highnes most Humble & thankfull servants.¹

[*No signature*
or date.]

Making allowance for an effusiveness which was rather the style of a previous generation, this remarkable composition can only be characterized as abject and hypocritical.

Barnstaple, with its forts and other defences, was given up upon this capitulation, on Saturday, the 2nd of September,² 1643. The causes of the collapse are, I think, on the surface. Half of the garrison had been either killed, or otherwise lost, in an ill-judged, ill-conducted, and unsuccessful sally. Perhaps few of those left of it could be depended upon to resist an assault. Half of their arms and a

¹ A Copy, Additional MSS., B. M., No. 18,980, f. 110.

² John Aubrey in the notes on "Day-fatalities," in his *Miscellanies* (ed. 1857, p. 16), assumes that the surrender of Barnstaple was on the 3rd of September—one of his "remarkable days"; this was also Cromwell's Thanksgiving Day for the victories of Dunbar and Worcester, of which it was the anniversary, and, as it turned out, the day on which the Protector died.

considerable quantity of ammunition had also been lost. Besides, there had been, of course, always a Royalist faction in the town, although not, it seems, a numerous one. At Plymouth, such "malignants" were secured, and the more troublesome sent up to the Parliament in London to be dealt with. These, the Royalist inhabitants, had now an opportunity of making their voices heard; and the intermediate party, comprising the indifferent, the irresolute, and the selfish, were probably not less tired of the repeated impositions of martial rates, exactions which were practically forced loans, and the other demands of an entirely arbitrary authority, for the defence of the town. They would naturally incline to an arrangement on terms which were admitted to be conciliatory, and which at least promised a release from similar extraordinary burdens in future. In addition to these influences, the forts at Bideford and Appledore had already passed into the hands of the enemy, who consequently commanded the entrance to the port;¹ and the fall of Bristol a month before, and the belief at the moment that Gloucester and Exeter were on the verge of a similar fate, shook the confidence of the majority of the dominant party in the ultimate success of their cause.

This, then, was the issue of all the efforts and

¹ The precise date of the surrender of Bideford and Appledore is uncertain; but as it was "certified" at Oxford on the 2nd of September that the forts had been given up by their several garrisons to Colonel Digby, it must have been not later than the 30th of August, and perhaps earlier (*Mercurius Aulicus*, Aug. 27—Sept. 2, 1643, Burney Collection, B. M., vol. ii.).

sacrifices of the previous twelve months. The fortress fell at the first summons, and, it may almost be said, before a hostile soldier had been seen from its defences; there is no evidence, so far as I have discovered, that Colonel Digby molested the town in any way. What those defences were I have endeavoured to describe. The fortifications alone had cost the town an enormous sum for those days. Besides the items relating to the construction of the Great Fort, the entrenchment, and the Castle works, already quoted at p. 115, the compiler of the Summary estimated in a round sum, where it was obviously impossible to ascertain particulars, other expenses as follows:—

The Repaire of our Bridge the demolishing of Houses and laying Waste of Land on which the Fort Lyne and Intrenchments were made, more than ... £3,000 0 0

The whole cost of these material defensive works alone could not therefore have been less than five thousand pounds.¹

But this did not, of course, comprise the whole of the military expenditure of the town down to the date of the first surrender. There are other items of the Summary which will be properly given in this place—they have already been drawn upon for their important historical material, and are now quoted statistically:—

¹ Exeter, the walls of which, however, were intact, although out of repair, spent about a thousand pounds less on its defences.

For raising and arming 4 foot companies and a troop of horse upon the first publishing the Commission of Array, which in money and quarters from 15th Sept^r to 15th Dec^r 1642 came to £1,030 0 6

For Money and Quarters for 640 foot Souldiers under Col. Rolls, Col. Chidley, Capt. Trevillian, and Capt. Bennet together with 70 Horse under Capt. Freeman from 16th Dec^r 1642 to 17th Sept. 1643 4,900 0 0

In Money and Provisions to furnish 2 Ships to keep the Port from May to Sept. 2nd, 1643, and setting forth a Man of war 190 0 0

The total expenditure, according to all the items of the Summary already enumerated, bringing the account down to the first surrender, amounts to £13,721 18s. 3d.

What was thought of these reverses to the Parliamentary cause by the rank and file of the party in Devonshire may be gleaned from the following extracts. The first is from one of the London news-sheets, under the date of September 7, and the passage is inspired, it appears from internal evidence, by a South Devonian. It is rough and vigorous, not to say vulgar, but not an uncommon specimen of the news-reporter's style of that period :—

There is lately intelligence from Devon, that the three Maritime Townes in the North, Barnstable, Biddiford, and Appledore, are revolted, and have entertained the Cavaliers, where of necessity it must needs prove trechery, and a long

time double dealing Now what number of the Kings forces have thus frighted their cowardly hearts, is not certainly knowne, some say 800, other some a thousand, but by the story the greatest number not 1500 horse and man, and under such weake spirits, Captaine Lord [*sic*] Digby only excepted, that it is almost incredible to beleieve it : as for Colonell Ackland, and Captaine Gifford, a Hare starting out of a fur [*fuz?*] bush hath often cast them off their horses, and make each kisse the ground. The conditions and termes, or summes of money to be paid to the kings party, is not yet knowne, but whensoever it be, they must not expect the favour and love, &c. [The writer then gets somewhat incoherent, but goes on—] And are the Cavaliers now their friend? It might be wished that they knew them so well as Master Parker of Borrington, Sir Richard Stroud of Mevy, Mr. Savery of Shilston, Mr. Hele of Curlew [*?*], and others, whose houses, goods, and cattell within and without doore, by old experience have triall of their curtesie.¹

The suggestion of treachery is further developed in the following piece of intelligence. But *nous sommes trahis!* is the not unfamiliar cry of a beaten party:—

By a messenger this day from Devonshire it is certified That Barnstable and Bedyford, two eminent Towns in those parts are of late most treacherously betrayed to the King's forces under the command of the Lord [*sic*] Digby, through the perfidiousness of the Maior of Barnstable, who to secure or regain a small moiety of his estate in danger to be carried away by the Cavaliers, basely and treacherously conspired with the Maior of Bedyford to betray both Towns ; but they

¹ *The Weekly Account*, No. 2, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. x.

have not admitted of any Garrison of the Kings Forces but covenanted to pay contribution to that party: What the issue will be, we shall hear afterwards.¹

One more extract must be given. It is a Puritan dirge over the fall of Barnstaple:—

Bastable is taken, and severall other Townes in the West, as for Bastable, we are assured it was delivered through the cowardise of the Mayor, or *worse*, and that which makes the story most sad, is, there were in that Towne more true Blades for Religion and Liberties, then in any Towne in England: and such, as had they had any of valour and understanding in Armes to have governed them, they had been long happy; but misery hath befallen them, and they are become a prey to Spanish Digbie, and now they hang their harps upon the willows, and remember Jerusalem weeping.²

It was very true. Had there been one resolute man—"of valour and understanding in Armes"—with the requisite commission in this crisis, a different page of the history of Barnstaple might have been written. Such a man would have been Robert Blake, a citizen soldier who, as a matter of fact, defended Lyme successfully during a siege of eight weeks against the very army (Prince Maurice's)

¹ *A Perfect Diurnall of some Passages in Parliament, &c.*, Sept. 4-11, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. x.

² *The Parliament Scout, communicating his Intelligence to the Kingdom*, Sept. 7-15, 1643, Burney Collection, B. M., vol. iii. The epithet applied to Colonel Digby is in allusion to his having been born in Spain, which happened whilst his father, Lord Digby, afterwards created Earl of Bristol, was the English Ambassador there. It was intended to be damnatory, as the family was suspected of a leaning to Popery.

which was at this time looming as a threatening cloud over Barnstaple, and who subsequently held Taunton against all comers. The only professional soldier connected with the garrison of Barnstaple of whom any mention is made, Captain, or, as he is now styled, Lieutenant-Colonel Freeman, according to his own account, left his post, excusing himself on the ground of the "treacherous surrender of the town by the inhabitants."¹

Some unknown collector has preserved with the other MSS. relating to the surrender of Barnstaple of which I have given copies, an "Extract," as it only purports to be, of a letter from King Charles to Prince Maurice, in which the articles granted by the Prince are approved and confirmed. The letter, it appears, was written from before Gloucester, which the King was then besieging. In the night following that very day the camp-fires of Essex and his relieving army of London apprentices appeared on Presbury Hill, and the King, burning his huts, drew off his army and abandoned the siege. The following is a copy of the interesting document to which I have referred :—

Extract of a Letter from his Mat^{ty} to Prince Maurice
5th Septemb. 1643.

CHARLES R.

Right Deare & right Entirely beloved Nephew &c.
whereas wee receyved in a Letter from you y^e Condiçions
made by you wth our Towne of Barstaple, wee doe hereby

¹ *Fifth Report Historical MSS. Commission, App., p. 1096.*

signify to you, & wish you to declare as much to that our Towne, that wee doe very well approve of them, & shall bee very carefull to see the same observed. And ptticularly for as much as concerne y^{or} Articles of Pardon ; And if any ptticular pson concern'd in that agreement shall thinke it fit to take out our Pardon in a more Formall manner under our greate Seale, wee have given order to both our Principall Secretaries of State, that upon theyr addresse unto them within y^e Space of a moneth after y^e date hereof wth Sufficient Certificate that hee was at y^e tyme of the agreement wthin or wthin y^e jurisdiccon of that our Towne hee shall forthwth ppare a Warrant for our hand to give order for the passing of his Pardon in the manner aforesaid, &c.¹

No time seems to have been lost by the Mayor and Corporation in availing themselves of the very lawyer-like suggestion of the latter part of the King's message, in which no doubt may be discerned the hand of Mr. Secretary Nicholas. In the Corporation accounts for the year ending Michaelmas, then close at hand, there is an item of expense allowed which is evidently connected with this business of suing out the pardon :—

xl. paid Theodore Martyn for his journey to Oxford.

This is confirmed, indirectly, by a letter printed in Gribble's *Memorials* (p. 464), which fixes the period of the transaction—the commission, still extant, therein referred to as having been obtained at Oxford when the townsmen of Barnstaple “were there soliciting for their pardon,” is dated October 10.²

The pardon, which is general and inclusive, was

¹ Additional MSS., B. M., No. 18,980, f. 110.

² *Records, Supplementary*, No. 7.

subsequently passed under the Great Seal, and is still preserved among the archives of the borough. It is beautifully engrossed on parchment, and appended to it is the great seal of England in perfect condition. The text is apparently an adaptation to some extent of a general formula, but in other respects is applicable to the special case. It is, however, too lengthy and formal to be reproduced in this work.¹

Colonel Digby, having taken possession of Barnstaple for the King, remained there several days, enjoying the involuntary hospitality of the Mayor, the shadow of which is still to be seen in the records of the borough :—

xxl. Allowed to Mr. Will^m Palmer maior towards his expenses in entertayninge of Collonell Digby & his company here xi dayes. And of iiij^s vii^d paid for Wyne bestowed in entertayninge of seven Captaines & gent. by Mr. Maior att Mr. Dawe's howse.²

Of William Palmer, Mayor of Barnstaple, whose troublous year of office was now drawing to a close, a brief notice may here appropriately find a place. We need not, I think, credit the unworthy charge levelled at him by the scurrilous writers whose words have been quoted in another page. Perhaps, with reference to the part which he took in the surrender of Barnstaple, nothing worse was really to be said of him than is reported of the Mayor of

¹ It is printed in Mr. Chanter's *Records*, No. xxvj.

² Extracted from the original Book of Receiver's Accounts.

York, in Shakespeare's play, when sorely tried in somewhat similar circumstances:—

“The good old man would fain that all were well.” *

This was the third time that William Palmer had sat in the mayoralty chair; the first time had been forty years before. He was a merchant, the friend and trading partner of John Penrose one of the philanthropic townsmen of the period whose memory is still green in Barnstaple. Penrose mentions him and the relations existing between the two in his will, dated nearly twenty years earlier, alluding to him as “a most just and upright dealer, and just in all his accompts,” and leaves a legacy to each of his eight children. Palmer's public character was acknowledged by the Corporation in a peculiar way some years afterwards, when Anthony and John Palmer (presumably his sons) were exempted from payment of interest on a sum of money “on account of good services to the Town by William Palmer.”

The “extraordinary forces” within the defences of Barnstaple—that is, as I understand the term, the militiamen, volunteers, and all soldiers except the local trained band—had been already disbanded according to the articles of capitulation. In the accounts of the year the Town Clerk has payment for “passes made to all the souldiers att their depture out of the Towne.” No Royalist garrison was to be imposed upon the town; but whether

* “Henry VI.,” pt. iii. act iv. sc. 7.

this article was adhered to subsequently is very questionable. The conditions which, according to Lord Clarendon, "Colonel Digby saw precisely observed," seem to have been covertly limited by the Royalist historian to those relating to plunder of the town and violence to the inhabitants.

Two days after the surrender of Barnstaple—that is, on Monday, the 4th of September¹—Exeter capitulated to Prince Maurice on probably similar terms. Vicars, the furious Puritan writer, in a spirit chastened by this reverse, and with a reckless use of metaphor, remarks: "The Lord suffered the wheel to turn and to give us a sore lash, to curb and correct our former high hopes and carnall conceits of nothing but victories."²

Colonel Digby was thereupon ordered by Prince Maurice to proceed to the investment of Plymouth, and to take part in a combined operation there. This was delayed, however, by the movements of the Prince himself, who lingered in the "rich and pleasant" city of Exeter, and was detained by the subsequent obstinate defence of Dartmouth, which lasted a month, and by a fever which he contracted during the siege. It is stated by Lord Clarendon that Colonel Digby, within a few days, had received so considerable an addition to his force, presumably from North Devon, that he marched to Plymouth at the head of 3000 Foot and 800 Horse.

¹ So Clarendon. Isacke says the 3rd. Dr. Oliver, who is very confused on this point, says on Wednesday, the 5th (which was the 6th), and that the garrison marched out on the Friday following.

² *Jehovah-Jireh—God in the Mount*, p. 409.



PART II.

*FROM THE SURRENDER OF BARNSTAPLE TO PRINCE
MAURICE TO ITS REVOLT TO THE PARLIAMENT.*

September 2, 1643—June 27, 1644.

IT is to be inferred that the Royalists, having peaceably obtained possession of Barnstaple, had no intention, at the time, of maintaining it as a fortified place. It had been stipulated that no garrison should be imposed upon it; and one of the articles of the formal capitulation (which has not been preserved), quoted with effect somewhat later, seems to have provided for the levelling of the fortifications. At all events, Colonel Digby, during his eleven days' occupation of the town, and before drawing off his troops, took the obvious precaution of compelling the Corporation to dismantle the works.

To "slight," as was then the term, these elaborate defences seems to have been, as such processes usually are, a comparatively easy and inexpensive

business ; but that it was done superficially is abundantly evident. The works not long after this were not only susceptible of reparation, but were actually reinstated ; and the remains of the Great Fort, still existing, show so much of the original construction of the work as to indicate that it could have been but little reduced or impaired. The following interesting particulars connected with the proceeding have been taken from the Receiver's accounts of the year ending Michaelmas, 1643 :—

The Receiver demandeth allowance of . . . iij^{li} paid sevrall persons for castinge downe y^e brest worke of the trench of y^e fort as by the pticulars thereof appeare.

And of ij^{li} vii^s iii^d paid sevrall psonns for pluckinge downe of all the Redoubts as by the pticulars thereof appeareth.

And of xij^{li} xi^s paid sevrall psonns for fillinge upp of cclj yeards of the Trenches as by the pticulars thereof appeare.

And of iiiij^{li} xvi^s & vi^d paid for dismounting of all the great Ordinance & for portrage keyage & Carriage of them.

These items seem to refer to the levelling of the outer breastwork only of the Great Fort, which would amount to a partial filling-up of the dry ditch—to the similar treatment of some of the line of entrenchment about the town—and to the razing of the redoubts, of which there must have been several. The guns of the forts were removed to the quays, where some at least of them were still lying several months later, as we learn from a casual observer who noticed them.

There is no evidence, so far as I am aware, that the inhabitants of Barnstaple, at this time, suffered

any particular ill-treatment at the hands of the Royalist troops, although that such was the case is far from improbable if one may infer from the military insolence which appears to have been rampant in Exeter. Nehemiah Wallington, who copied and jotted down in his note-book, it must be admitted with strong Puritan bias, every report that was in circulation, tells us that the Cavaliers in Exeter, after taking possession of the city, "used the people most cruelly, and did all the violence they could do to them, only sparing their lives. . . . The rude soldiers would not forbear upon the least discontent given to them, to draw their rapiers upon the citizens and wound them; but especially when they are in their cups, they swagger, roar, swear, and domineer, plundering, pillaging, or doing any other kind of wrong; to break shops and houses they count it as nothing, taking away boots, shoes, stockings, hats, or other commodities they can lay their hands on, and no justice dares to resist them, and by this means the city is in such a miserable condition that they are even terrified to the death."¹ A curious contemporary tract printed in September, 1643, a copy of which is in the British Museum,² confirms this account. It is entitled *Strange, true and lamentable Newes from Exceter, &c.*, and has the then somewhat uncommon feature of woodcut illustrations. On the title-page is a figure of Devonshire, personified by a woman, kneeling; and issuing from

¹ *Historical Notices, &c.*, by Nehemiah Wallington, from the original MSS., 1869, ii. p. 175.

² King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cxxvii.

her mouth is a label on which is inscribed, "Have pity upon me, Have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me. Job 19, verse 28." On the last page is represented a man, naked and tied to a post, being flogged by another man with a cat-o'-nine-tails.

A passage from the *Mercurius Aulicus* of October 22-28, 1643, full of allusion to the sentiments prevailing at Barnstable at this time, I must quote entire; of course it should be taken with due reservation. It is a specimen of the literary manner of Sir John Birkenhead, the editor of the Oxford diurnal, which Vicars called the "King's Lyer-in-Chiefe." The elder Disraeli quoted it, in part, as an illustration of Birkenhead's sarcasm and wit—or what passed for such—in the *Quarrels of Authors* (1814, ii. 262):—

When we told you last weeke of a Committee of *Lawyers* appointed to put their new *Scale* in execution, we named among others Master *George Peard*, whom since we are informed was none of that Committee. And this I confesse was no small errour, (to reckon Master *Peard* among the *Lawyers*) because indeed he now lyeth sicke at Barnstable in Devonshire, so farre from being their new Lord Keeper, that he now despaire to become their *doore-keeper*, which office you know he performed heretofore, to the generall satisfaction of the Kingdom. [The meaning of this allusion is lost.] But since Master Peard hath been thus desperately sicke, (his Vote, his Law, and haire having all forsooke him) his Corporation of Barnstable hath beene in perfect health and loyalty. For we had certaine notice (from those who saw it done) that when newes was brought to this Towne, that His Majestie had defeated the Rebels at Newbury,

taken part of their Canon, and made them fly towards London, the Inhabitants of Barnstable rung their Bels and made Bonfires for joy of the good newes. And when a factious Londoner had raised a slander and put it in print, that the Towne of Barnstable *did now repent their admitting His Majesties Forces into their Towne*, the Maior and Chiefe of the Towne declared in a purposed voluntary writing (which I have seene) that *whoever said so was an enemy to their Countrey*; adding farther, that *they were grieved at no one thing so much as that they had submitted to His Majestie no sooner*, which will be no doubt a speciall cordiall to their languishing Burgesse.¹

No one within the political horizon of Barnstaple was at that time so obnoxious to the Royalists as George Peard. The offence of his active and prominent agency in the town on behalf of the Parliament had been recently aggravated. He had been appointed one of the sequestrators within the county of Devon for "the speedier and more effectually putting in execution" of the Ordinance of Parliament for seizing and sequestering the estates of "notorious Delinquents" for the use and maintenance of the Parliamentary army.

The surrender of Barnstaple to the Royalist forces corresponded, in point of time, very nearly with the culmination of the King's cause in this war. Parliament, on the other hand, had distinctly lost

¹ *Mercurius Aulicus*, October 22-28, 1643, Burney Collection, B. M., vol. iii. The sanguinary but indecisive battle of Newbury, between the forces of the King and those of the Earl of Essex, had been fought on the 20th of September.

ground; its efforts had been spasmodic and wanting in combination. Oliver Cromwell, then a colonel of Horse in the Eastern Counties, was just emerging from obscurity, and endeavouring to infuse energy into its adherents. "It's no longer Disputing"—he wrote about this time to his honoured friends the Parliamentary Commissioners at Cambridge—"but Out instantly you can! Raise all your Bands . . . get up what Volunteers you can; hasten your Horses. . . . I beseech you spare not, but be expeditious and industrious! . . . You must act lively; do it without distraction. Neglect no means!"¹

In Devonshire the Parliament had no forces left in the field. But it still held Dartmouth and Plymouth. Prince Maurice, on the 10th of September, directed Sir Edmund Fortescue and Colonel Edward Seymour to summon the garrison of the former town to surrender. The Prince then left Exeter "with 1,030 soldiers, with their carriages and waggons," for Totnes, where he was joined by Colonel Digby and 500 Horse and Foot, which had been withdrawn from before Barnstaple, "and so went to besiege Dartmouth."² It does not appear that this town was at that time so strongly fortified as at a later period; in the summons of Prince Maurice the demand made is for the surrender of "the castle, town, and block-house, only."³ Dartmouth made an obstinate de-

¹ Carlyle's *Oliver Cromwell*, i. 129.

² *Strange, true and lamentable Newes from Exceter, &c.*, London, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cxxvii.

³ Printed in Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, ii. p. 306 note.

fence, however, of nearly a month, during which the besiegers lost many men from the excessively wet weather and from desertion. On the 30th of September, the Royalists attempted an assault, and the recreant James Chudleigh, now a Royalist colonel, foremost among the assailants, was mortally wounded and left, it would seem, within the town. He was buried at St. Saviour's, according to the parish register, on the 4th of October. On the 5th, Dartmouth capitulated on honourable conditions. At, or soon after, this time the Prince was laid up at Milton,¹ by "the ordinary raging disease of the army, a slow fever," and Dr. William Harvey, the great physiologist and discoverer of the Circulation of the Blood, came from the Court to see him.² Colonel Digby proceeded with the army on the 17th to the investment of Plymouth.

Two transactions of extreme political significance were taking place in the autumn of the year 1643. One was a league into which the Parliament entered with the Scotch, for the avowed purpose of bringing into England a Scotch army in aid of the further prosecution of the war against the King; the price paid for the compact being the undertaking on the part of the Parliament to impose the "Covenant," which meant the Presbyterian system of Church government, upon the English people. The other was a truce made by the King with the Irish rebels, with the object of withdrawing, for his use against the Parlia-

¹ Probably South Milton, near Kingsbridge.

² Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, ii. p. 307 note.

ment, the avenging army which had been sent over to Ireland before the quarrel between King and Parliament had reached its crisis of civil war in 1642. As a retaliatory measure this counter-move has been defended. But to make peace, and without the consent of Parliament, with the Irish Papists, whose frightful massacres of the Protestants in the autumn of 1641 were yet fresh in the minds of the English people, was considered bad enough ; to bring over those very Irish ruffians to fight in the Royalist ranks, which the King also was bargaining to do, was held infinitely worse. The Covenant was not accepted with unanimity by the Puritans themselves. The threatened Irish invasion provoked everywhere beyond the influence of the King's armies feelings of dread and horror. The effect was to embitter the religious difficulty still more, and to make the chances of a peaceful accommodation indefinitely remote. A regiment was landed at Minehead from Ireland in October, and reached Bristol, joining Lord Hopton's command. These soldiers were at first erroneously believed to be an instalment of native Irish who had been brought over to massacre the English Protestants !

I have not discovered that any troops from Ireland were actually landed at Barnstaple ; but it seems that the landing was apprehended, at all events, now that the town was in the hands of the Royalists, and as it was known to have been a favourite port of communication with Ireland.

The ascendancy, at this time, of the Royalist party

in Devonshire led to the formation of an Association of Cornwall and Devon for the King, in January, 1644. In this proceeding the authors of it, the leading Royalists of these counties, were following precedents which had been established by both parties elsewhere. The outcome of it was "An Agreement to a Protestation," a copy of which is here given from Rushworth's *Historical Collections* (v. 382), where it is called "The Cornish and Devonshire mens Oath" :—.

I, A. B., do in the Presence of Almighty God promise, vow and protest, with my utmost Power to maintain and defend the true reformed Protestant Religion, established by Law in this Kingdom, against all Popery, Popish, and other Innovations of Sectaries and Schismaticks, as also his Majesty's Person and Rights, against all Forces whatsoever, and in like manner the Laws, Liberties, and Privileges of Parliament, and of this Kingdom ; and I shall to the utmost of my Power preserve and defend the Peace of the two Counties of Cornwal and Devon, and all Persons that shall unite themselves by this Protestation in the due Performance thereof, and to my Power assist his Majesty's Armies for reducing the Town of Plimouth, and Resistance of all Forces of Scots Invaders, and others, levied under pretence of any Authority of two Houses of Parliament, or otherwise, without his Majesty's personal Consent.

Certain "Articles" were further agreed upon by the Association, the full text of which is also to be found in Rushworth (v. 381). There are no signatures appended. One of the articles engaged that there should be provided "a thousand barrels of powder and ten thousand fire-arms at the charge of

both counties, whereof Cornwall to be a fourth and Devon three parts, according to the proportion of the grand Subsidie." Another enjoined "The solemn Celebration of the Fast on the second Friday of the month [ordered in Council by the King] and conformity to the services appointed."

The prime motive of this organization was, of course, that of raising money for the purposes of the war. The unfortunate Devonians soon discovered that they had exchanged one set of arbitrary and rapacious requisitionists for another. The form which the new exaction took was a weekly assessment levied on the parishes, but upon what principle, if any, is not ascertainable. The amount was probably elastic, and in each case as much, roughly speaking, as the victim would bear. The machinery of the old rate-books of the subsidy collector, already existing in every parish, was conveniently available for the purpose. I have only met with one instance conveying anything like a specific idea of this assessment. In August (1644) the *weekly* contribution of Malborough and Portlemouth, in South Devon, the former amounting to £11 15s. and the latter to £6, were made over to Sir Edmund Fortescue by the Commissioners for the maintenance of the garrison of Fort Charles, in Salcombe Harbour.¹

Malborough is an agricultural parish of average size, and from the foregoing statement of the quota levied upon it, the enormous pressure of the imposition, equal, it should be remembered, to three or four times its amount in present money, may be con-

¹ Fox's *Kingsbridge and its Surroundings*, 1874, p. 166.

ceived. We need not wonder that the families of the smaller gentry, of the yeomanry and of tenant farmers, were impoverished and ruined—not always, as is often boasted by their descendants, for their loyalty, but by the curse of civil war, from which all suffered alike. Besides, these exactions came after others, no doubt just as burdensome, which had been enforced by the Parliamentary Committees; and they were supplemented at a later period, especially within the sphere of influence of the King's military officers, by simpler and more sweeping spoliation, both in money and in kind.

The Association was merged, in the month of June following, into a Committee of the four associated counties of Somerset, Dorset, Devon, Cornwall, and the city of Exeter. The signatories of this Committee include the following known Devonshire names:—John Hele, Peter Balle, and John Were¹—the last, I believe, of Silverton; not, of course, the Parliamentary colonel, of Halberton, already mentioned in these pages.

To return to the original Association of the two Counties. The arbitrary assumption of authority is conspicuous no less in the attempt of the Association to fetter the consciences of the people than in their extortion of money. The form of Protestation, or oath, was ordered to be delivered by the Sheriffs to the Constables, and by them to the ministers of all churches and chapels, to be published the next Sunday following; when every man present was to take and subscribe the same, others within ten days;

¹ *Trevelyan Papers*, Camden Society, pt. iii. p. 250.

the result to be certified to the Commissioners (as they style themselves) at their next meeting after the 20th of February.

Oaths and protestations were then an important part of the recognized apparatus of government, from which, even at this day, we are unfortunately not wholly emancipated. We have had one illustration of this in the imposition of the Covenant by the Parliament, and the Royalist party were only adopting an ordinary practice, however futile.

The Protestation, says the *Mercurius Aulicus*—

was universally taken by the two Associated Counties, onely Master Peards nest (the good towne of Barnstable) began to scruple, and as their Burgesse taught them, began to consider their workes were yet standing, and looked as though they would mutiny: whereupon their Maior (a sufficient Corporation-Brother) commanded all the Towne to bring what Armes they could to keepe the Peace.

This seems to point to a popular disturbance, and to the measures prudently taken by the authorities to suppress it. But the opposite inference was apparently drawn from it by the *Aulicus*, and it is not obscurely hinted that the Recorder was at the bottom of it. Charles Peard, the mayor of that year, was the Recorder's kinsman, but their precise relationship to each other I have not been able to make out. The incident must have occurred early in the month of February, as on the 19th of that month Arthur Trevor, Prince Rupert's correspondent at

* *Mercurius Aulicus*, week ending Feb. 24, 1643 (1644), King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cxlvii.

Oxford, whose sparkling and delightful letters so well deserve to be collected, communicated to the Prince this morsel of intelligence :—

Barnstable in the west that submitted to yo^r Bro : & by his Mediaçon wth his Ma^y was receaved into the Kings Protection & had his pardon is now upp in Armes for the Parliam^t w^{ch} is done as is strongly conceived by that son of Pardiçon Perd the Recorder there.¹

The same number of the *Mercurius Aulicus* continues with the information that notice of the state of affairs at Barnstaple—

being brought to Prince Maurice he . . . sent some Troops of good Horse with these demands—That after 7 [*sic*] monthes forbearance they would perform their Articles, which were to slight their workes (not yet demolished), to pay their weekly Contribution, to take the Protestation, and to render up Master Peard. The answer was all affirmative, onely Master Peard who could not without danger of his life looke upon Oxford . . . hath beene able to runne away without the Physitian's Certificate.

The last words are of course an allusion to Peard's illness, which had been previously the subject of a coarse jest of the *Mercurius Aulicus*.

This meagre account is all that I have been able to gather relating to this abortive revolt of the Parliamentary party in Barnstaple. The movement was ill-timed, and it seems to have collapsed ignominiously at the first sight of Prince Maurice's troopers. It should be observed, however, that the

¹ Additional MSS., B. M., No. 18,981, f. 47.

only description of the incident which I am able to adduce is derived from exclusively Royalist sources.

The *Military Scribe*, a Parliamentary news-sheet which enjoyed but a transient existence, contains the following item of intelligence, adding a little, from the other side, to what has already been collected in reference to this incident :—

Sir John Berkeley, the Governour of Excester, is gone from thence to Barnstable in the North part of Devonshire, to raise men and moneys, and to plunder those well-affected People that will not take the new Cornish Protestation.¹

After the taking of Dartmouth in the previous October, Prince Maurice had proceeded with his whole force to besiege Plymouth. The place had been previously invested on the 15th of September. The Plymouth of to-day gives no idea whatever of the closely-packed town of the middle of the seventeenth century. It was about a third larger than the contemporary Barnstaple, with a population, estimated by Mr. Worth at about 6,000, in the same proportion. It was an irregular quadrangle in shape, one side bounded by the water of its inner harbour, Sutton Pool; the other three sides imperfectly protected by the mediæval town walls. Beyond this line of defence, however, a series of detached earthworks had been thrown up by the besieged; and with the advantage of an open communication with the sea the town was successfully held against the repeated assaults of Prince Maurice's

¹ *The Military Scribe*, No. 2, Feb. 27–March 5, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cxlv.

army. A minutely detailed and interesting account of this defence survives. On Christmas Day the siege was abandoned. Prince Maurice's subsequent movements are not distinctly recorded. At first he retired to Tavistock, from which there is a letter of his, dated January 12, mentioning his want of muskets. Later, at the beginning of March, he is found at Totnes and Exeter, endeavouring, but with ill-success, to recruit his forces; and many of his men who had been pressed in Devonshire and Cornwall were deserting daily.¹

In the interval, this haughty and impassive young General may have found the occupation of Barnstaple, on the plausible pretext of a breach of its articles of capitulation by the town, a not unwelcome compensation for the disappointment arising from his recent failure before Plymouth. The proceeding also looks very much like an illustration of the fable of the wolf and the lamb. In the result Barnstaple had again to submit to military domination.

The occupation of the town by Prince Maurice's troopers was signalized by excesses on the part of the Royalists to which apparently the inhabitants had hitherto been strangers. A Parliamentary news-sheet of this date, with the purpose, as it states, "to cleare the doubt and different reports of Bastable in the North of Devon"—declares that—"they [the Royalists] have not spared a house unplundered, besides their cruelty to Master Charles Peard the

¹ *The True Informer*, March 16-23, 1643 (1644), King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cxlviii.

Maior which they did halfe hang and plunder[ed?] Master George Peard and carryed him and some other of the cheife to Exceter gaole where they yet remaine in durance, if Master Charles Peard be not dead."¹

The mayor lived, however, at least long enough to survive other troubles in the eventful year of his office. For some unexplained reason, he refused to give up the mayoralty at the proper time in the following October, and, according to the Rev. Richard Wood's notes, was dismissed from the chair and fined.² The description of the treatment suffered by George Peard comes to us through the medium of a publication authorized by Parliament and is perfectly credible. It is suggestive of the troubles into which the patriotic fervour of our eminent townsman, who had provoked the utmost animosity of his political opponents, had at last involved him. His incarceration appears to have been only for a short time. He returned to Barnstaple, but did not long survive. Already in ill health, the hardships of an imprisonment in the county gaol—as the county gaol then was—may have hastened the end.

I have not discovered any record of the state of affairs in Barnstaple from the time when it was occupied by Prince Maurice's troopers in February until the end of June, when an incident occurred which again brought the town within the vortex of

¹ *A Continuation of Certain Speciall and Remarkable Passages informed to the Parliament*, Feb. 29–March 7, 1643 (1644), King's P^r mphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cxlvi.

² Chanter's *Literary History of Barnstaple*, p. 120.

military operations. A small garrison, which the Prince, at that time engaged elsewhere upon an undertaking which taxed his utmost resources, had barely spared from the forces at his disposal, held possession of the forts and overawed the inhabitants.

Prince Maurice, in the second week of April, with all the forces that he could collect, and possibly after depleting the garrison of Barnstaple to its lowest limit, laid siege to Lyme Regis—"a little vile fishing town," says Lord Clarendon, "defended by a small dry ditch, which after he had been before it a month was much more like to hold out than it was the first day he came before it."¹ Lyme, in fact, made an heroic and a successful resistance, lasting until the middle of June.

I may here digress a little and find place for a description of the state of the rival parties in the winter of 1643-44. But obviously it can only treat of a few salient features.

The King's army or, to be precise, that portion of it under the immediate command of the King, lay quartered in and around Oxford. The university city was a camp, or rather a barrack, again thronged as it had been during the winter before by a heterogeneous crowd. Gownsmen and buff-coated soldiers elbowed each other in its streets and pleasant walks; and college dignitaries, gay Cavaliers, and political

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, pp. 516 b, 527 a.

notabilities paced its quadrangles together. In semblance, at least, a stately Court was kept up. Feminine intrigue was in full swing—a lively Republican gibes at the ladies of Oxford as “Plotters in petticoats and politicians in fardingales”; and mirth and gaiety pervaded the temporary drawing-rooms of the Queen and her satellites. Once a month, when a day was set apart as a solemn Fast, for which a form of Divine Service was enjoined in all churches and chapels, the distractions of the times asserted their presence. And, underlying the surface of careless frivolity, there were in truth abundant elements of anxiety for the King and his intimate counsellors. It has been remarked by Eliot Warburton that the past campaigns had thinned the adherents of the Royalist cause of many of the best and worthiest, while the reprobates lived on merrily.¹ How truly this was illustrated in Devonshire we shall see as the story develops.

A considerable body of troops had landed from Ireland in November, composed mostly of native Irish, to join the King's army. They were met and defeated by a Parliamentary force under Sir Thomas Fairfax (who now first appears on the scene) in Cheshire. Eight hundred of his prisoners, who were English, and as equally ready to fight for the Parliament as for the King, after taking the Covenant (an indispensable preliminary), were enlisted by Fairfax. In January the Scots, under engagement with the Parliament, crossed the border in large force, their professed object being “the good

¹ Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, ii. 314.

of religion in England, and the deliverance of their brethren out of the depths of affliction."

At this time the Court had attracted to Oxford most of the Peers and Commons who had seceded from the Parliament at Westminster; and the setting-up of a rival Parliament at Oxford was in reality aimed at by the King's Proclamation summoning thither all members of both Houses, excepting those employed in the military service of the King. It was a hollow pretence, leading to no results, except to give a *quasi* authority for the levying of the money in the old form of a benevolence (successful to the extent of £100,000), and for exacting contributions of plate which was at once coined into money at the Oxford mint.

On the other side, Parliament also had lost by death two of its most prominent Members—Pym, the leader of the House of Commons, the principal author of "a revolution which he never intended and which he did not live to see;" and Hampden, who has been placed in a special niche of fame as the Englishman's ideal patriot. From that time, it is not too much to say, the political aspirations of the Parliamentary leaders in the direction of popular liberties were less conspicuous than their efforts, with the Covenant millstone about their own necks, to enforce a general conformity to the narrow Presbyterianism which they had adopted.

Parliament had also ordained their monthly fast-days—the last Wednesday in every month being set aside—on which occasions much Puritan fervour

characterized the religious services. How the day was observed by the highest exemplar at Westminster we are thus told: On one of the fast-days, Nov. 29, of this year, the Commons met at St. Margaret's early in the morning, and sat out two learned sermons, which were "not ended until about four of the clock in the after-noone."

As a companion to this sketch, the following instance may be given of their *practical* Christianity. A pamphlet in the British Museum Library,¹ purports to be the Confession of Father Bell, executed at Tyburn, Dec. 11, 1643, who is stated to have been a priest beyond the seas, and being an Englishman born, to have said Mass in England and seduced divers of his Majesty's subjects. He was hanged and quartered with another Roman Catholic. They "died," says the pamphlet, "very obstinately, living and dying in blindness and darknesse; what was in their minds, whither they should goe, and where they are, God knowes; we are not to judge." Arthur Bell's name is one in the list, given by Dr. Lingard, of Jesuits and priests who were executed in the years 1642 and 1643. As many seem suspiciously enough to have died in Newgate after condemnation. This persecution was consequent upon the proclamation issued by the King, goaded on by Parliament, in March of the former year, for putting in execution the laws against Popish recusants, which had fallen into desuetude since the days of Elizabeth.

In their methods of raising money for carrying on the war, the Parliament financiers were more fertile

¹ King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cxxxv.

in resources than those of the King. Forced loans of money and plate on the security of the "Public Faith" have been mentioned. All who failed to contribute were assessed to pay the twentieth part of their estates towards the support of the cause. Each county or town, at the same time, was required to provide for the maintenance of its own soldiers. Then came the weekly assessments in the counties. Delinquents, that is, supporters of the Royal cause either in person or by money, had their estates sequestered and their rents, goods, and moneys seized. An Excise was established for the first time in English history—literally a cutting-off from the sale price of most of the commodities of ordinary consumption. And, not to leave a stone unturned, in March, 1644, an Ordinance was promulgated exacting a contribution of the value of one meal in the week from each household in London, for the special purpose of arming and forming into regiments the auxiliary forces within the city.

Although the "mongrel" Parliament of Oxford (so called by the King himself) could do nothing collectively, an apparently well-meant effort was made by its members in their individual capacity to open negotiations for peace with the opposite party. This overture signed by the Princes, Peers, and Commons, was addressed to the Earl of Essex, the Commander-in-chief of the Parliamentary forces; but it omitted any recognition of the Parliament sitting at Westminster. A dangerous power, such as would have dazzled many a statesman, was thus placed in

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the hands of Essex; but the temptation was rejected, and the overture scornfully ignored by the slighted and diplomatically insulted Parliament. Lord Clarendon, who blamed Essex for his contumacy, declared, with many compliments on his previous successes and highmindedness, that he never throve afterwards.

This correspondence took place at the end of January. On the 8th of February the Earl of Essex issued a proclamation ordering all soldiers to repair to their colours.

It is a remarkable and, from a local point of view, very striking fact that in the summer of 1644, the year upon which these notices have now entered, no less than three armies—as armies were accounted in those days—marched through Devonshire. Not one of these had any business, so to speak, in North Devon; but each directly and materially affected the fortunes of Barnstaple. The incident in the military history of the town, to which the course of the story is now tending, can only be made intelligible by an explanation of the objects and movements, so far as can be ascertained, of these armies; and for that purpose it will be desirable to take a purview of the operations of the war in their larger area from the beginning of the year. Much military science (so-called) will not be found displayed in these operations, for the modern military critic assures us that there was little or none.¹

¹ Major Walford's *Parliamentary Generals of the Great Civil War*, 1886, *passim*.

Of the two sufficiently well-defined series of military operations into which the new campaign resolved itself, with that of the Northern counties this relation has no concern; it led up to the battle of Marston Moor (July 2) in which the combined forces of the Marquess of Newcastle and Prince Rupert were crushed by Fairfax and Cromwell, and the King's cause in the North was damaged beyond recovery. In the Southern and Western Counties, in the beginning of the year, Sir William Waller with a division of the Parliamentary army occupied the country south of Oxford. In March, Lord Hopton, with the forces under his command quartered about Bristol of which he was Governor, advanced to attack him, and was defeated at Cheriton near Alresford, on the 29th of that month. Our only interest in connection with this battle is in the fact that Sir John Berkeley brought to Hopton's army a reinforcement of two Devonshire regiments, the first raised by the Royalists in the county, which were involved in the defeat. It is also a curious fact, in connection, that Berkeley was accused, whether justly or not, of having released some Algerine pirates from Launceston gaol in consideration of their enlisting into the King's army.

The Parliamentary army under the Earl of Essex, recruited principally in London, now took the field. It numbered, on paper, 7,500 Foot, 3,000 Horse, and a train of artillery. The military affairs of the Parliament were managed by a Committee of Lords and Commons, associated with Commissioners from Scotland, who sat as the "Committee of Both

Kingdoms" at Derby House, Westminster. The two armies, Essex's and Waller's, were to act independently, but under the supreme command of Essex. The investment of Oxford, to be followed possibly by its siege, was one of the first details of the Parliamentary plan of campaign. The foreshadowing of this movement reached the Court; and Queen Henrietta Maria, who was one of the first to take alarm, resolved, apparently against the advice of those about her, to seek a place of refuge. After hesitating between Chester and Exeter, the latter was chosen. She left Oxford in the middle of April, and (being in a delicate condition) travelled by easy stages through Bath and Bristol, and reached Exeter on the 1st of May.

As the Parliamentary armies closed upon Oxford and forced back the King's outposts, the situation of the Royalists became almost desperate. At all events, before the threatened close investment of the city could be completed, the King with 6,000 Horse and Foot, in the night of the 3rd of June, slipped out of Oxford between the two Parliamentary armies. The subsequent proceedings of the two Parliamentary Generals were the result of a quarrel between them which is historical. Waller's army, contrary to the design of the Parliamentary War Office, was ordered by Essex to follow the King. Essex's attention was diverted at this important juncture to the enterprise of crushing Prince Maurice and relieving Lyme Regis; although Maurice might well have been considered, in diplomatic phrase, a *quantité négligeable*, and the

"little vile fishing town," with the support of the fleet, was well able to hold its own. From Essex's own letters it would appear that he thought the command of Devon and Cornwall of vital importance, and that it would weaken the King by depriving him of the contributions exacted from those counties. It was certainly believed by the Royalists that they were threatened by a combined movement of both armies. "Had Essex and Waller," wrote Lord Digby in a letter to Prince Rupert describing the critical position of the Royalist army, "jointly either pursued us or attacked Oxford, we had been lost."¹ To the non-military observer it may occur that if there had been any real generalship on the side of the Parliament on this occasion, the battle of Naseby might have been fought a year earlier, and the war brought to an end in 1644.

The flying march of the King's army, after escaping from Oxford, has been compared to the flight of a hunted hare. Followed by Waller, the King made for Worcester, and a few days later advanced to Bewdley. Then, finding Waller in his path, he doubled back upon his former course, and skirting Oxford without entering it was joined by the infantry which had remained in the city. Here he learnt that the army of Essex had been drawn off to the south; whereupon the King advanced northwards, and at Cropredy Bridge, about twenty-five miles from Oxford, a small two-arched structure on the Cherwell, over which he had

¹ Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, ii. 418.

ridden on the morning of the battle of Edgehill, his army came into collision with Waller's. This was on the 29th of June. The result of the encounter was on the whole unfavourable to the Parliamentarians. The King failing, as was usual, to follow up such success as he had obtained, marched off two days afterwards.

The Queen had given birth to a daughter at Bedford House, Exeter, on the 16th of June; and concern for her safety undoubtedly influenced the King in his determination to follow Essex, who was already known to be on his march towards Devonshire.

The advance of Essex with a much superior force through Dorsetshire compelled Prince Maurice, on the 15th of June, to abandon the siege of Lyme. The Prince had lost nearly 2,000 men during the operations. He retired upon Exeter with the remains of his army, amounting, according to Lord Clarendon, to "full 2,500 Foot and 1,800 Horse"; but as Lord Jermyn, writing at the time from Exeter, estimated, not 3,000 altogether. Rushworth, however, states that the force divided, part going to Bristol—with what motive is not obvious.¹ The garrison of Exeter under Sir John Berkeley was consequently strengthened, affording all the protection to the Queen that was then possible to be given. But it was believed by her to be insufficient. An ineffectual attempt was made to obtain a pass from Essex for her removal, but as she had been impeached of high treason by the Parliament she could

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 520 b. Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, ii. 423. Rushworth's *Collections*, v. 683.

only be offered safe conduct as a prisoner to London. From a letter written by her to the King on the 28th of June, in which she describes herself as "the most miserable creature in the world," it is clear that a flight had already been determined on. On the 30th, the same day on which the troops of Essex were crossing the border of Devonshire at Axminster, the Queen set out in a litter from Exeter. The mouth of the Exe and Torbay being watched by the ships of the Parliamentary fleet, her only way of escape lay through the loyal county of Cornwall to Falmouth, where it would seem that some provision had been made for the contingency of her escape thence to France. That night she rested at Crediton. A local chronicler has recorded this first stage of the journey:—

In June The Queene lay at Credyton at Mr. Tukers house and from thence shee rode at [?] to] Lanson with all her Troope. At the same time Prince Morrish came at Crediton with all his foreses.¹

The following day, the 1st of July, the same on which King Charles recommenced his march "with drums beating, colors flying, and trumpets sounding" after the fight at Cropredy Bridge, the Queen continued her journey to Okehampton. Here a local chronicler also recorded the incident:—

July 1, 1644. Queen Mary came hither with a great many and stayed 2 nights.²

¹ "Thomas Roberts's Diary," *Trans. Dev. Assoc.*, vol. x. p. 325.

² "Rattenbury's Journal," Bridges's *Oakhampton*, p. 95. Henrietta Maria was designated "Queen Mary" in the Liturgy of the Church of England, and it appears was popularly so called.

On the 3rd she reached Launceston; from which place Mr. Francis Basset, of Tehidy, Sheriff of the county, writing to his wife, says: "Here is the woofullest spectacle my eyes yet ever look'd on; the most worne and weake pitifull creature in y^e world, the poore Queene, shifting for one hour's liffe longer."¹ And so the unfortunate Queen passed onward, taking shipping at Falmouth, and, only barely escaping the Parliamentary cruisers, eventually reached the French coast.²

I have detailed these incidents, in their chronological order, with what may have perhaps seemed unnecessary minuteness, for the purpose of elucidating an important episode of Barnstaple history, hitherto obscure, which it will appear was closely consequent upon them. It was in the midst of the events just described that the Puritan town seized the opportunity of revolting to the Parliament.

The incitement to this, as it proved in the sequel, ill-timed action, is generally supposed to have been the accident that Prince Maurice, either from unwillingness further to deplete his attenuated army then lying in and around Exeter, or for some other reason, incautiously withdrew part of the Horse which he had placed in garrison at Barnstaple, to serve as a life-guard to the Queen in her projected journey.³ However this may have been, the Parliamentary

¹ Printed in Polwhele's *Traditions and Recollections*, 1826, i. 15.

² Miss Strickland's romantic and inaccurate story of this flight has been finally disposed of by Mr. P. Q. Karkeek in his elaborate paper printed in vol. viii. of the *Transactions of the Devonshire Association*.

³ *The True Informer*, No. 38, July 6-13, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxvi. Rushworth's *Collections*, v. 682.

party in Barnstaple were of course aware of the approach of Essex's relieving army, and we are not without suspicion that the design of recovering the town had been secretly entertained even before the opportune occasion of the withdrawal of the Royalist troopers had arisen.

The ground upon which this suspicion rests is the veiled meaning which appears to run through an original letter, still extant, which was written on the 25th of June by a Parliamentary partisan then in Barnstaple — Colonel John Luttrell¹ — to Captain Bennet, the same who had held command in the Parliamentary garrison there, who was now at Tenby in South Wales. Here follows the letter, or so much of it as is necessary to show what it conveyed :—

Brother Bennet immédiate after my landing and loosing your company, I received intelligence not only of the great change of the affections of the inhabitants of the country but alsoe of great expectation they had of ayd and releife from the easterne p^{ts}, not to trouble you wth relations of every pticular passage leaving it which may better become the hearing than the pen I only insert thus much to you ;

[He then writes that the army of the Parliament in considerable force had come to Lyme Regis and raised the siege there, not a little to Prince Maurice's damage ; that there were reports of the Queen's confinement at Exeter and that she was likely to die ; that Taunton

¹ He was of the Santon Court family, a branch of the Luttrells of Dunster Castle, and was born in 1610. Narcissus Luttrell, the diarist, was a nephew of his. The old manor-house of Santon, on the north coast of Devon, on the verge of the wild waste of sand-hills known as Braunton Burrows, still stands. It was probably Colonel Luttrell who, as Captain Luttrell, was at Sourton Down (see p. 155).

had been forsaken by the Cavaliers, who had gone to Dunston Castle and Bridgwater, which might prepare for pillage; others had gone to Minehead, and he hopes ships are kept on those coasts "to prevent the flight of those vipers." Resuming, he comes to the main purpose of his letter.]

S^r I find a considerable number of able men such as I question neither for resolution or ability the only defection is armes and ammunition, the pvision whereof I must necessarily engage you to pcure from Capt. Molton,¹ that w^{ch} is desired from you is that you importunately sollicite him that he will be pleased to send us a considerable quantity of powder and match I believe weshall pvide bulletts enough our selves, but least the ships may not bee all at Milford at recit hereof wherby such store may not presently be sent as hee may bee able & willing to spare us [What] I therefore earnestly entreat you to send away is barrells of powder presently wth a proportion of match to it to supply our present want, and such greater proportion as may bee . . . spared us wth speed/: wthall pray use your utmost & most prevalent endeav^{rs} wth Capt. Molton that hee send us 300 armes bee they musqetts or carbynes if it bee possible, I desire them but for a short season and will certaynely returne them safely to you agayne I hope wee shall not need any men from thence (being certayne of 1000 here already) except those who fled from hence to the ships for shelter whom I must desire may bee speedily returned: S^r I hope no engagem^t in the Countrey hath withdrawn your pvdent care from your owne, though I am enformed you ar ayd governor at Tinbey, the bearer hereof will declare to you the place to land wth such other occurrences as are considerable: wh^{ch} I doubt not but will be thoroughly pondered and

[¹ Captain Moulton was in command of a Parliamentary man-of-war in the Bristol Channel.]

maturely . . . by you w^{ch} will ever engage your frendes here to you [&c.].

Yo^r brother

JOHN LUTTRELL.

Bastable, June 25, 1644.

[Indorsed by Captain Bennet]

Collo Luttrell frō Bastaple to
me in Tenby June 25. 1644.¹

At first sight it might appear from this somewhat enigmatical letter that at the time when it was written the insurrection had actually taken place; an allusion towards the close of it seems to be made to some such incident which Bennet was already familiar with. But I do not think that this is its right interpretation. Besides being inconsistent with what we know of collateral events, it is obvious that Colonel Luttrell wrote with cautious reticence, purposely reserving, as he says, that "which may better become the hearing than the pen," and hints only at some undertaking in conception, for which the arms and ammunition were urgently wanted. There would have been no occasion for this reserve if the event had taken place; there would have been no motive for omitting all reference to it. Nor would there have been any necessity for smuggling the arms and ammunition ashore. There is little doubt, therefore, in my mind that on the 25th of June, when Luttrell wrote, the design had not come to maturity. The allusion to the Barnstaple men who had fled to

¹ Philipps MSS. (Thirlestaine House, Cheltenham). Bennet Correspondence, &c., No. 11,015, art. 37.

the ships for shelter must have been connected with some previous incident, the story of which is at present unknown.

It would appear, in the absence of any further information, that the *coup-de-main* was precipitated immediately after the dispatch of this letter; the arms and ammunition had not been waited for. It was no doubt carried out by Colonel Luttrell himself, leading the old trained-band soldiers and volunteers, who had remained in the town after the first surrender, some of whom may have been impressed into the Royalist service, and were not unwilling to revolt at the first opportunity. Colonel Luttrell's estimate that he could calculate upon a thousand men for the contemplated rising (for so his letter seems to read) may have been a sanguine one. But whatever may have been the available force at his command, at all events all accounts agree that as soon as the Queen's body-guard had left Barnstaple the revolutionists overpowered the small Royalist garrison that remained, and took possession of all the defensible points of the town for the Parliament.



PART III.

FROM THE REVOLT OF BARNSTAPLE TO THE PARLIAMENT TO ITS SURRENDER TO THE KING.

June 29—September 17, 1644.

THE precise date of the Revolt of Barnstaple, which forms the subject of the concluding passages of the foregoing Part, has not been recorded; but there is sufficient circumstantial evidence to show that it must have taken place on the 26th or 27th of June.

The Queen's flight had been planned before the 28th of June, on which day she wrote revealing her intention to the King, and, as we have seen, she actually set out on the 30th. It may be inferred that Prince Maurice had already, on or before the 28th, ordered the withdrawal of his troopers from Barnstaple to serve as the Queen's escort.

Among the De la Warr MSS.¹ there is preserved

¹ *Fourth Report of the Historical MSS. Commission*, App., p. 304.

a letter from the Prince to the Earl of Bath, dated Exeter, June 28, notifying that he is sending Major Paget with a party to prevent disturbances "apprehended" at Barnstaple. A "party," I believe, means any indefinite number of troops detached on any particular service. It is implied that this was a precautionary measure; but it is doubtful if the outbreak at Barnstaple, from its very nature obviously a surprise, could have given time for apprehension. It is more likely that the detachment of the force was prompted by a rumour of the actual insurrection. In the contemporary account of an official and authorized Parliamentary news-sheet, it is stated that "Colonel Pricket—the Governor of Barnstaple—sometime a major under Inchequeen [Lord Inchiquin] of his own Regiment, a true Irish plunderer,"¹ commanded the party. The Parliamentary writers were not always conversant with the names of their Cavalier opponents, and Colonel Pricket may possibly be identified with the Major Paget of the previous notice. And his description as "Governor of Barnstaple" leads to the conjecture that that was the reason why Major Paget was so employed, although there is no other trace of his connection with Barnstaple. Be this as it may, Major Paget appears to have attempted to enter Barnstaple, but, finding the townsmen up in arms, to have retired and awaited support.

Prince Maurice who, as we have seen, was with his army at Crediton on the 30th of June, having

¹ *Perfect Occurrences of Parliament*, July 5-12, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xii.

become aware of the reception which Major Paget had met with at Barnstaple, detached Colonel John Digby (by a coincidence the same who had made acquaintance with Barnstaple in the previous September), with a strong reinforcement to Paget's assistance.

Meanwhile, the Prince was personally escorting the Queen as far as Launceston, where he was three days later, having brought with him the news of "greate rebellyon" at Barnstaple.¹

Colonel Digby's immediate command was probably composed of Horse and dragoons, but it seems to have also comprised several companies of Foot. The whole, including Paget's party, amounted, if we may credit the local estimate, to five or six hundred in number. Reckoning with the dates before us, it may be observed that no time was lost; but assuming that the reinforcement set out on its march from Crediton on the 30th of June and lay that night at Chulmleigh, it could very well come within sight of Barnstaple in the afternoon of the following day—a distance altogether by the direct road of that period of about thirty miles. Digby, having reached Barnstaple, assaulted it on Monday, the 1st of July.

The approach to the town of Barnstaple from the south-east, after passing over Cooney Bridge, then a timber structure which crossed the deeply-cut channel of a stream running through the Port marshes to the Taw, was by a narrow and some-

¹ Mr. Basset's Letter, printed in Polwhele's *Traditions and Recollections*, 1826, i. 18.

what crooked road through the thinly-built suburb of Litchdon. In this thoroughfare stood the then newly-erected pile of Almshouses founded by John Penrose. The buildings, which still exist unaltered, enclose a spacious quadrangle, the front being on a line with the roadway and close to it. Between the two wings of the façade is a loggia, or open colonnade of short granite pillars, which support its roof and stand on a wall or plinth breast-high.

Between the suburb of Litchdon and the main entrance to the town, where the South Gate had formerly stood, the approach was by a causeway over an open space—which then was a waste, periodically overflowed by the tides—in modern times an ornamental area called the Square. There was another way, by a narrow lane which swept round at the back of Litchdon and entered the town by two branches, one of which reached the same destination.

The Parliamentarians in Barnstaple having been, it seems, forewarned, were on the alert. The warning had come in a terrifying form—a threat, which is not incredible, from Prince Maurice that he would sack and burn their town. The Prince had some of the same kind of temper as his brother Rupert, who, notwithstanding his brilliant qualities as a soldier, was unscrupulous, and whose severity after the storming of Bolton only a few weeks before, when the houses were pillaged, and 1,600 persons were said to have been slaughtered in the streets, was doubtless fresh in recollection.

The Great Fort, it will be remembered, had been

dismantled after the surrender in the previous September; the guns had been removed, the trenches had been levelled, and all the redoubts had been "plucked down." In the interim, so far as is known, these conditions remained unaltered. As there is evidence that the guns were still lying on the quays several weeks later, the inference is that little if anything had been done to restore the defences of the town.

The point where the two roads diverged and led to the town was too vital a one to be left undefended; and probably here and on the piece of waste, called for many years afterwards Litchdon Green, which lay between these two roads within the angle where they separated, such breastworks as could be hastily constructed were thrown up in the two days which the warning given to the townsmen allowed for preparation. The first resistance to the attack of Colonel Digby's force was probably offered at the outpost at Litchdon Green. The party which held it were driven in, and the conflict then surged onwards through the narrow road in front of the Almshouses. Of the details we have only the merest glimpses. There are still to be seen in the oaken door of the hall of the building, opening at the northern end of the loggia, bullet-holes (bullets still sticking in them, not long before Gribble's time) which are traditionally said to have been made in some fight of the Civil War. The shots, from the position of the marks which they left, must have been fired by the assailants, whoever they were, when the loggia was defended from

an enemy approaching from the southern road. Whether or not these tangible evidences of a fight are to be connected with Digby's assault can of course now be only a matter of conjecture, but there is sufficient ground for the supposition.

The conflict did not end here. It would seem from a letter written by an inhabitant, and possibly an eye-witness—"An eminent man to a M.P."—and printed in one of the contemporary news-sheets¹ that Digby's party succeeded in forcing his way into the town, and the struggle became a street fight. The resistance appears to have been obstinate, and, as we certainly know, the result was the defeat of the assailants, the town remaining in the hands of its defenders. "In this," says the writer of the letter, "is not to be left out the remembrance of that true man, Colonel John Luttrell, who behaved gallantly, and repulsed the enemy when they had gained a great part of the town. The actions of this noble Colonel were so gallant and heroic in this business, that we desire you would take notice of it and return him thanks."

The writer of the letter which has been just quoted reported that the Royalists lost "about seventy slain and mortally wounded." This estimate, made in the first flush of victory, turns out to have been exaggerated; more sober accounts agree, however, in stating that about twenty of Colonel

¹ So at least I infer. This interesting extract was communicated to the *North Devon Journal* in December, 1881, by "C. C.," who gave no further reference than to the Library of the British Museum. I have not been able to verify it.

Digby's force were killed in the fight. A Lieut-Colonel Hide, the writer of the letter adds, was one of these. "Major-General Pigott," who led on the Irish, had his arm broken. There was a Major Pigot, of Lord Inchiquin's Irish regiment, who had distinguished himself at the assault of Wareham a few weeks before.¹ Nearly thirty prisoners were taken, among whom were Howard, Jones, and some other officers. The loss of the defenders in killed and wounded is nowhere stated. A significant entry in the Summary, however, throws this much light upon it:—

In money paid 2 Chirurgions for curing
wounded Soldiers £20 0 0

A large item. The entry comes a few weeks later in the chronological order of the entries of the Summary, which is generally very accurate, and may have been in consequence of the time occupied by the cures. The item can hardly relate to any other conflict.

Scanty as these notices unfortunately are, they leave an impression of the severity of the conflict which on that summer's day, in the year 1644, raged in the streets of Barnstaple, and in the sequel show the deep thankfulness of the inhabitants as for a deliverance from some great peril. "God hath wonderfully preserved us," says the writer of the letter, "from the French and Irish, who did combine

¹ The confusion introduced by the names Pricket, Paget, and Pigott, is deplorable. My own impression is that by all three the same person is meant.

to plunder our town, and to fire the houses, and to put the inhabitants to the sword without so much as giving us summons." A note from the Journal of the Rev. Richard Wood, Vicar of Fremington, near Barnstaple, is to a similar effect :—

1544. Memd^m. That the 1 day of July 1644, a day never to be forgotten by the inhabitants of Barnestaple for God's mercie and favor shewed in that miraculous deliverance of them from that bloody conspiracy of some of our neighbours in inviting and bringing in 5 or 600 horse and foot, being French, Irish, and some English ag^t the said town with purpose to have put all therein to the sword, and to have possessed themselves of the whole town, but were repulsed and driven away by the small power the townsmen had ; our warning and notice was but two days before.*

There can be no doubt that Mr. Wood's highly coloured allusion to the "bloody conspiracy of some of our neighbours," implicates the Royalist party within the town.

In a more concise way a notice of the event was also recorded in the parish register ; it is in duplicate, one form, of which the following is a copy, being in the register of the burials, and the other in that of the baptisms :—

The First day of July 1644 this Towne was most wonderfully preserved from the Irish and French which came against them for to destroye this Towne which is a day to be remembered of us of this Towne for ever.

JOHN SLOLY, Clarke.

* Printed in Chanter's *Literary History of Barnstaple* [1866], p. 120.

The extreme dread of the French and Irish which haunted the minds of the Puritans of Barnstaple may appear, and has no doubt appeared, strange and improbable to many not aware of the peculiar composition of Prince Maurice's army. I have been told that in the circle of *literati*, who flourished at Barnstaple early in the present century, some of whose effusions are still to be found by the curious in the pages of the *North Devon Magazine*, and the *North Devon Miscellany*, and whose knowledge of local history appears to have been neither critical nor very profound, it was even an idea that the whole story of the French and Irish irruption was the result of a scare, and that no such attack upon the town ever really happened!

The landing of several parties of Irish soldiers at the south-western ports in the previous months has been already mentioned. Not only was the horror which pervaded the country after the atrocious massacre of the Protestants in Ireland in 1641 still fresh, but it was aggravated by the stories now in circulation with reference to these new arrivals. Everywhere they robbed and murdered. In Shropshire, they had buried wounded men alive; it was even reported that they were cannibals. It was quite true that by an order of Parliament they were to be refused quarter. Lord Inchiquin, with 800 "Irish Rogues" had landed at Weymouth and joined Prince Maurice's army before Lyme, and it was a detachment of these which Major Paget led against Barnstaple. Again: that the Royalist armies were supplied through the Queen's influence

with men and ammunition from France is certain. Many of these men were doubtless old campaigners, and did as Frenchmen always do in, what this was to them, an enemy's country. In Prince Maurice's army was the Queen's regiment of French, out of which 200 men were cashiered about this time for their insubordination and license. The "pressure and abuses of the French Horse" at Cullompton were a subject of complaint by a local writer.¹ Perhaps their vices—peculiarly French vices—were still more a terror of the country. Some horrible stories were in circulation.²

Besides the notices of the Deliverance of Barnstaple recorded at the time, there are some interesting subsequent references in the Borough accounts to its commemoration in after years. One occurs in the year 1650—a disbursement of £5 for 75lbs. of powder "used on the 1st of July;"³ and again in the year 1656—an entry of £2 paid for "gunpowder spent the 1st July,"⁴ in celebrating, it may be assumed, the anniversary of the event. Another is among the town memorials nearly a century afterwards, showing how the commemoration had been persistently kept up. This is a statement, incidentally set forth in a legal document, that upon all occasions of public rejoicing—"and also on the first day of July yearly, which was kept by some antient inhabitants of the Town in remembrance that the Town

¹ *Trevelyan Papers*, Camden Society, pt. iii. 248.

² See *A Diary or an Exact Journal*, &c., July 4-12, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xii.

³ *Records*, No. lxviii.

⁴ *Ibid.*, No. lxix.

was on that day delivered from French and Irish which came against it,"—bonfires had time out of mind been made on the top of the Castle Hill, &c.¹

Our county historians have taken great liberties with this incident. The perversion of history even in so small a matter is to be deprecated ; it is a less consideration, perhaps, whether or not the Barumites, be our sympathies what they may, should have their due credit. Nothing can be more certain than that the Parliamentarians of Barnstaple, by their unaided efforts, repulsed the attack upon them made by Colonel Digby. The Messrs. Lysons, however, in their *Topographical and Historical Account of Devonshire* (1822),² giving what they allege to be Vicars's account of the transaction, state that Digby's attack was repulsed by *a detachment sent by the Earl of Essex*. The Rev. Thomas Moore, in his *History of Devonshire* (1829), copies the version of the Messrs. Lysons ; and our latest Devonshire historian, Mr. R. N. Worth, in his *Popular History of the county*—a work of very considerable merit on its own lines—unfortunately perpetuates the same error. But Vicars's account, although undeniably confused and incoherent, scarcely admitted of an interpretation which is now known to be historically inaccurate. I give the passage, less for the intrinsic interest which as a contemporary chronicle it may possibly have than as a justification of my criticism of the modern historians who have perverted it :—

¹ Gribble's *Memorials of Barnstaple*, p. 80.

² P. 34.

The greatest part of the Garrison at Barnstable being called off by Prince Maurice (who it was then said was to goe to Pendennis Castle to be a Life-guard to the Queene) yet the Garrison would needs leave a stinking savour behind them of their old trade of Plundering. Whereupon the Inhabitants (knowing the Lord Generall [Essex] was at hand) tooke courage, and stoutly resisted them, and in the issue, bravely overcame their late tyrannicall Masters; which the most noble Lord Generall understanding of, presently sent them a strong Party of Horse, under the Command of the noble Lord Roberts and Sir Phillip Stapleton to helpe them to beat them quite away and keep them out from returning againe. And thus they most happily shooke off that servile yoke of those cruell Cavees, and twice repulsed young Digby and others whom Prince Maurice sent to have reduced them again under that banefull bondage, and killed divers of them and tooke many others prisoners.¹

The contemporary Parliamentary news-writers, who would have had no interest in extolling the exploit of their friends in Barnstaple by lessening any credit due to the Earl of Essex, refer to the transaction in no uncertain terms. This, for instance, is the report given in an authorized publication:—

Prince Maurice . . . thought to have seized Barnstaple, and for that purpose selected a party, but upon intelligence of their arrivall, the Townsmen rose against them and beat them out, fought with them & slew almost 20, where upon they presently acquainted the L. Generall [Essex] of their desires to be protected by him, and so the Lord Roberts

¹ *God's Arke*, or, The Third Part of the Parliamentary Chronicle, 1646, p. 266. "Cavee" was of course a nickname given to the Cavaliers.

was forthwith sent with a strong party to secure and settle the Towne, &c.¹

Rushworth, who may have helped to mislead our county historians, fell into the error of stating that Prince Maurice's attack on Barnstaple was *after* the Earl of Essex had reached Tiverton.²

I have given proof which is, I believe, incontrovertible, that the day on which Colonel Digby assaulted Barnstaple—the day of the great Deliverance—was the 1st of July; the evidence is the entry in a contemporary private diary, the informal record in the parish register, and the commemoration of the event on the anniversary of the day for nearly a century afterwards. On that day the army of the Earl of Essex was advancing from Axminster to Honiton. This fact is derived from an authentic Itinerary in the *Diary of Richard Symonds*, printed by the Camden Society.³ The army was therefore at a distance of sixty miles, or about two days' cavalry march, from Barnstaple, and what was more, a hostile army was on the flank of the line of march. The extreme improbability that any of Essex's force was at Barnstaple on the first day of July is at once apparent.

The army of the Earl of Essex, consisting of about 3,000 Horse and 7,000 Foot, and accompanied by a

¹ *Speciall and Remarkable Passages informed to the Parliament*, July 3-10, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxiv. *The Weekly Account* of July 11, the *Perfect Diurnall* of July 1-8, and *The Perfect Occurrences of Parliament* of July 5-12, have paragraphs to the same effect.

² *Historical Collections*, v. 684.

³ 1859, p. 97.

train of artillery numbering more than 40 guns, marched from Honiton to Cullompton on the 2nd of July. On the 3rd it reached Tiverton, where it remained quartered for more than a fortnight.

It was at Cullompton on the 3rd of July, that the Earl first received intelligence of the state of affairs in Barnstaple, which, it appears, at once influenced his further movements. An extract from a letter which he wrote from Collompton to the Committee of Both Kingdoms, and which has never been printed, disposes of all doubt with reference to the time and nature of the General's succour:—

Part of y^e Enemy's forces having beene against Barnstaple (the successe whereof y^r Lo^{ps} will see by y^e inclosed) hath caused me to send a p^{ty} of horse and foote for their releife, and am adrawing with the rest of y^e body my selfe to Tiverton and soe to steare my course according to y^e intelligence I have from them. Collhampton, July 3, 1644.^{*}

The enclosure to which Lord Essex refers, and which would have been of the highest interest to us, has not been preserved. His lordship's epistolary style is more concise than lucid; the "success" to which he alludes evidently means not the success of the enemy's forces, but that of the Barnstaple men two days before. Not a moment seems to have been lost in detaching the support which he mentions. The advanced party of Horse, we learn from other

^{*} Letters received by the Committee of Both Kingdoms at Derby House, MS., Record Office, vol. ii.

sources, was under the command of Lord Roberts,¹ "field-marshal of the army" (an office in that sense now obsolete), and it reached Barnstaple on the 4th of July.

At Tiverton, says Sir Edward Walker, Essex "countenanced the rebellious Town of Barnstaple in their second Revolt and put a Garrison into it."² This allusion to a previous revolt must be to the little - understood insurrection of the previous February.

Lord Roberts's party at Barnstaple was immediately strengthened and made up to three regiments of Foot and two of Horse.³

Whilst Lord Roberts was at Barnstaple, where he remained ten days, a tragedy was enacted in the town, the like of which had neither before nor has since been witnessed by the inhabitants. The Rev. Richard Wood, in his "Journal," from which I have already quoted, has recorded: "On the 9th July, one Howard, a lieutenant, who was taken prisoner in the fight [of the 1st July], was hanged at the Highcross of Barnestaple."⁴ His crime was that of having been a deserter. He had been a lieutenant in Captain Pym's troop in the Parua-

¹ John Lord Roberts, or Robartes as it is now spelt, the second baron of Lanhydrock in Cornwall. At the Restoration he judiciously hailed the rising sun, became Lord Privy Seal to Charles II., and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and was created Earl of Radnor in 1679. "A man of a sour and surly nature, a great opiniatre" (Clarendon).

² *Historical Discourses*, 1705, p. 41.

³ Letters received by the Committee of Both Kingdoms, MS., Record Office, vol. ii., Earl of Essex's Letter: Tiverton, 10 July, 1644.

⁴ Chanter's *Literary History of Barnstaple*, p. 120.

mentary army in Devonshire, and, seduced by the example or influence of James Chudleigh and Captain Thomas Drake,¹ had gone over with a score of troopers to the Royalist side. He had now been taken in arms against the Parliament. He appears to have been condemned in due form by (as it is called) a council of war, or as we should say a court-martial.

There is some doubt whether his real name was Howard, Hyword, Haward, or Hayward. Phonetically, these are much alike. Perhaps, in common with the historic Howards, and after the manner of the period, he wrote his own name at large. In the contemporary notices of this unfortunate officer and his fate, he is stated to have been lieutenant in Captain Pym's troop of Parliamentary Horse. I have, at page 101, given an abstract of a printed letter describing a fight outside the walls of Exeter, on New Year's day, 1643, between troops of the garrison under Pym and Sir Ralph Hopton's forces. The signature of the writer of that letter is printed "Abell Hyword"; he is called in the title-page of the pamphlet "Lieutenant Hyword;" and from the internal evidence of the letter he was associated with Pym, and, there is no doubt, was his lieutenant. In "The List of the Armie Raised under the command of his Excellency, Robert Earle of Essex," &c., printed in 1642, the name of the lieutenant of Captain Pym's troop (No. 29) occurs as "Arnold

¹ Captain Drake had been taken prisoner, and sent from Plymouth to London to be dealt with by Parliament. He was discharged from the custody of the Sergeant-at-arms about this time.

Haward.”¹ Here the Christian name is different, although the initial letter is the same, and the surname is spelt in another way. In another form the same name occurs in a now rare tract, published in 1642, relating to some of the earliest incidents of the war which occurred in Somersetshire. I have not seen the tract, but its title runs as follows: “*Certaine and true News from SOMERSETSHIRE, with the besieging of Sir RALPH HOPTON’S HOUSE, together with the valiant and manfully performed courage of Mr. Arnold Hayward, gentleman souldier.*”² The mystification is curious; but I have little doubt of the identity of this officer with the “Hyword” of the letter, the “Haward” of the Army List, and the “Howard” of the story.

Lieutenant Howard, as a Parliamentarian, had taken part in all the engagements during the war in Devonshire and Cornwall, from Modbury to Sourton Down. In the Royalist service, to which he deserted, he appears to have had the rank of Captain.

Eight days after the fight of the 1st of July—in that narrowest part of High Street where Cross Street joins it, in the centre of the town of Barnstaple, and in front of the old guildhall, which, with its single, broad, timbered gable supported by a row of four square stone piers, overhung the street—

“They brought him forth to die
In the face of the sun.”

¹ Peacock’s *Army Lists of the Roundheads and Cavaliers*, 1874, p. 51.

² Catalogued in J. Camden Hotten’s *Hand-Book to the Topography and Family History of England and Wales*, &c., p. 202.

With circumstances of studied degradation, surrounded by Lord Roberts's red-coats, the ill-fated young officer was sacrificed a victim to outraged military honour. It was soldiers' law, from which there was no appeal.

The act led to some noticeable consequences. A few days later, Sir John Berkeley, the Governor of the garrison of Exeter, as a retaliatory measure produced from gaol one Captain Turpin, and hanged him. Turpin was not a military officer, but a Topsham or Exmouth sea-captain, who, just twelve months before, had been taken prisoner in an attack which he had made with his armed ship on Sir John Berkeley's position at Topsham, with the object of throwing supplies into Exeter, then invested by the Royalists.¹ At the instigation, it is said, of Sir John Berkeley himself, and notwithstanding the remonstrance of Colonel John Acland the sheriff, the judges, Heath, Foster, Banks, and Glanville, had sentenced Turpin to death at the Assizes. There does not appear, however, from the original letter, which I am about to print, that there was any intention of carrying this sentence into effect. Turpin had been, at all events, respited; and Sir John Berkeley, desirous perhaps of escaping a scandal, had, in fact, offered to exchange him.

The Earl of Essex, writing to the Committee of Both Kingdoms from Tiverton, July 15, thus comments upon the affair :—

¹ Letter of Sir John Berkeley, July 21, 1643, Add. MSS., B. M., No. 18,980, f. 88b. (Printed in *Notes and Gleanings*, Exeter, i.

Upon the hanging of Capt. Howard taken at Barnstable, formerly employed under Capt. Pym (who had a Troope in y^e West Country) who being a Lieut. ran away wth twenty horse at one time, they hanged Capt. Turpin on Satterday last, a sea Capt. taken in seeking to relieve Excester, and since condemned by Justice Heath by Ojer & terminer, but had beene kept a prisoner ever since, and at my being here they sent to exchange him for Serjeant Major Willis, w^{ch} exchange was so unreasonable as I refused it, not thinking they had beene soe bloody minded to execute a man in cold blood that had been soe long condemned; I am informed it was by P. Maurices Command, but if it please God I may have time to make them repent it.¹

The Commons were so incensed by this transaction that they at once (July 22) formally impeached the four judges of the Western Circuit at the bar of the House of Lords.² In the result Sir Robert Heath fled the country and died in France.

If Colonel Luttrell wrote to his friend and comrade Bennet an account of the transactions which have been detailed, his letter unfortunately has not been preserved. But on the 12th of July, when the position was assured, he writes as follows :—

SR.

Your presence is longed for exceedingly by me & as much wanted for the settlement of the affairs of this Country, I beseech you hasten the Armes, but if

¹ Letters received by the Committee of Both Kingdoms, MS., Record Office, vol. ii.

² *The Court Mercurie*, No. 4, July 20-27, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxviii.

they are not yet arriv'd att Milford, that you stay not for them but leave David Langdowne to come wth them as soone as they are ready : Your Colloⁿ Rolle is callinge in of his Regim^t of trayned souldiers & hopes one you to take your company as Captain Trevillian who is here doth for my pte my Lord Generall hath given me a Regi^{mt} of Vollunteirs w^{ch} I am raisinge as fast as I can & have presumed to chuse your selfe A Leiuten^t Collonell, whither of them you please to elect I much desire to know, I am very loath there should be a separation between us nowe if it may be otherways, however I leave it to your owne discretion, and if I may not be a fellowe souldier wth you in the same Regim^t yet I shalbe ready to be your second. I desire your aunswere if you come not your selfe wth theis bearer. Things succeed onexpresably well in England the Lord God of hoasts be praised. Old Anthony Moore was shott through the body in our fight at this Towne but is one recovery: if possibly you can pray bringe my grayhound home with you :

Your friend bro : & servant

JOHN LUTTRELL.

Barnistaple, July the 12th Ann^o 1644.

[Indorsed by Captain Bennet]

Collo. Luttrell Letter from

Bastaple to me in Tenby

July 12, 1644.¹

The effect of this letter was to bring Captain Bennet back to Barnstaple, where he appears to have received from Lord Roberts his commission as Colonel. Lord Essex, while staying at Tiverton, was anxious to obtain local reinforcements, but the

¹ Phillipps MSS. (Thirlestaine House, Cheltenham). Bennet Correspondence, No. 11,015, art. 39.

trained men of North Devon, as he complains, were only willing to serve under their own colonels, and there was not a sufficiency of arms for them. What was the result of Sir Samuel Rolle's muster is not known. Colonel Luttrell does not seem to have been successful in raising for his regiment of volunteers more than the 374 men which, according to the Summary, formed part of the garrison of Barnstaple under his orders until September.

Lord Roberts's troops, according to one of the diurnals, had been "cheerfully entertained" on their coming to Barnstaple. They had given immediate relief from the apprehension of exasperated enemies from without and of malignants from within. But there is reason to believe that, on the whole, Barnstaple must have been glad at their departing. The Summary gives an insight into the terrible burden imposed upon the inhabitants by their guests, who, moreover, borrowed for their exodus what they had as little intention of repaying as the Israelites had in the biblical precedent. These are the items:—

For quartering the Lord Marshall's Brigade with his Traine, 10 days, July 1644	...	£650	0	0
In money lent the Lord Marshall to be repaid in 20 daies, yet unsatisfied	...	465	0	0
Raised for his Soldiers upon the Town at their departure	... ..	314	10	0

If this was the cost of ten days' entertainment of the friends of the Puritan town, what must have been the sum extracted by the Royalist occupants during the previous months which the Summary (restricted, it

will be remembered, to claims for services to the Parliament) of course omitted?

Leaving, as it appears, three companies, which may be set down as numbering 300 men, under Captains Deane,¹ Needham, and Spooner, to strengthen the garrison, Lord Roberts, with the remainder of the detachment, rejoined the Earl of Essex's head-quarters at Tiverton on the 17th of July. The cost to the town of this reinforcement is duly recorded in the Summary:—

For quartering Captⁿ Deane's, Captⁿ Needham's, and Captⁿ Spooner's Companies from
4 July to 17 Sept^r 1644 £412 10 0

The Corporation, at this time, having presumably had enough of military governors, sent a petition to the Earl of Essex, which he forwarded to Parliament, and recommended to their serious consideration. In this petition—"the Town desires that their present Maior [Charles Peard] be made Governour, and Colonell to command and govern the Town in chiefe, that they may have power to summon in the County upon any occasion for their assistance, and to raise money by some easy tax in the north part of the County of Devon, being their division, to maintain

¹ This, I believe, was Richard Deane—in the following year Comptroller of Ordnance in Fairfax's army—Major-General at the Battle of Worcester, and afterwards Admiral at sea in the time of the Commonwealth—killed by a round shot by the side of Monk on board the *Resolution*, in the great three days' battle with the Dutch, under Van Tromp, off the North Foreland, in June, 1653. He was buried in Westminster Abbey with great state.

their Garrison.”¹ What came of this is not known, nor is it of much moment, as the town remained so short a time in the hands of the Parliament ; but Whitelock states that the petition was granted.²

In the midst of these incidents we obtain our last glimpse of George Peard, the associate of Pym and Hampden in the earlier struggles for freedom, and the life and soul of the Parliamentary cause in Barnstaple. It could have been no other than he who was the “eminent man” who wrote one of the accounts of the great Deliverance which I have quoted. And, according to the only evidence extant, this must have been in the last month of his life, for he was born certainly not later than in July, 1594, and he died, according to his epitaph, in the fiftieth year of his age. He was buried in the parish church. Among the fine mural monuments of the seventeenth century which still give so much interest to the interior of the ancient church of St. Peter, in Barnstaple, there are more sumptuous and elaborate ones, but there is none for design and workmanship comparable with that which memorializes George Peard. A finely executed bust of the patriot, in alabaster, is the central feature in a niche between two columns of Corinthian architecture which support an entablature and pediment all in the Renaissance style. He is habited in his Recorder’s gown. The face is of an ascetic and thoughtful type not unlike that of Cardinal Manning. Over the entablature, enclosed

¹ *A Perfect Diurnall of some Passages in Parliament*, July 22-29, 1644, King’s Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xiii.

² *Memorials*, ed. 1682, p. 92.

by the broken pediment characteristic of the Jacobean period, is an escutcheon on which the arms of Peard are emblazoned — *or, 2 wolves pass. in pale sa. langued gu.* Crest, *a pard's head coupéd at the neck or, pierced with a broken spear ppr.*—and beneath the plinth is another escutcheon containing the same arms quartered with two other coats. The inscription, soaring far above the usual platitudes, seems to bear witness pathetically to the fervent spirit withdrawn from a struggle which it believed to be in the highest cause of all :—

M S

Hic iacet Depositum Georgij Pearde militis Iesu Christi
sub cuius vexillo contra mundum, carnem, et diabolum
militavit, eâq. militiâ expletâ per Ducem pugnæ testem
victoriæ authorem, Angelis et Sanctis congaudentibus
coronatus fœlicissime vivit : Commilitonibus in carne
contra carnem bellantibus victoriam exoptans ut
in illis etiam fœlicitetur.

Vestum induit	anno {	a Ducis sui {	Partu 1644.	
triumphatum				triumpho 1631.
die					militiæ suæ 50.

Which may be thus translated :—

Sacred to Memory. Here lie buried the remains of George Pearde, a soldier of Jesus Christ, under whose banner he fought against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and his warfare being accomplished, having received his crown at the hands of his Captain, who had witnessed his fight and given him the victory, he lives in bliss rejoicing with Saints and Angels, and eagerly longing for the victory

of his fellow soldiers in the body still warring against the flesh, that in them also his bliss may be perfected.

He put on his triumphal gar- ment on the day	in the year	{ of his Leader's { birth 1644. triumph 1631. of his warfare 50.
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It will be observed that the day and month of his death are left blank in the inscription. The date of his burial cannot be supplied from the parish register, which was not kept from April, 1643, to July, 1647.¹

The fortunes of Barnstaple during the next two months were, as I have remarked, so closely connected with the operations of the several armies which in turn pervaded Devonshire, that it will be desirable to take up again the thread of the story of those transactions—a story as strange, confused, and, I believe, in a military sense, inexplicable as any in the whole course of the war.

The advance of the Earl of Essex to Tiverton with a largely superior force had compelled Prince Maurice to withdraw his army from about Crediton, and to recall the detachment which had ineffectually attempted to recover Barnstaple. Abandoning Exeter to its own resources, Prince Maurice concentrated,

¹ Another peculiarity of this inscription is its Christian chronology. The "triumph," or Resurrection, is usually supposed to have occurred A.D. 33, therefore the year of Peard's death would have been (dating from it) 1611 and not "1631." That this was not a clerical error of the inscriber may be inferred from a precisely similar computation having been made, in the same decade, in an entirely disconnected case; as I have more fully shown in a query which appeared in *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., v. 8, asking for an explanation, but to which no reply has been elicited.

on the 2nd of July, at Okehampton. The Queen was resting there on that day. Whilst at Okehampton, the Prince strengthened his army by drawing off most of the blockading force from before Plymouth. Rattenbury records something of the local experience of this occupation :—

July 2 to 19. Prince Maurice with the King's army quartered here almost 3 weeks; during which tyme very many sheepe were plundered and killed and eat by the soldiers, and the yeast hay and other provisions of the inhabitants were spent.¹

Incidentally, this extract gives us an idea of one of the collateral evils of military occupation in the time of the Civil War. The plundering which Rattenbury recorded in his homely fashion was apparently on a regimental scale. Petty pillage was almost irrepressible, and was common in the armies on both sides alike. Symonds² tells us that Essex's soldiers, at this very time, robbed the church of Newton St. Cyres of its communion plate, and took away from Whitstone church a pall of black velvet, worth, he estimated, £10. It is fair to add, however, that in the King's own army greater strictness in this respect was at least attempted, and the route might have been almost traced by the examples which were left hanged, duly ticketed with their crimes, on the nearest trees on the line of march.

Some of the difficulties encountered by the Earl of Essex in his dealings with the local supporters of

¹ "Journal" in Bridges's *Okehampton*, p. 95.

² *Diary of Richard Symonds*, Camden Society, p. 41.

the Parliament, and which hampered his movements, are given in one of his letters to the Committee of Both Kingdoms, dated from Tiverton, the 10th of July:—

. . . Although y^e Countyes of Sumersett and Devon shew great affeccion to y^e Parl^t and to be rid of y^e Egiptian slavery, yet there are two things great hinderances to the ayde we should have of y^e Country. The first is their desire to serve under their owne Countrymen, and not to be listed in my Army; And those few Country gent. that are here wanting Armes to Arme them, soe that although there be multitudes of bodyes of men appeares, yet little use can be made of them for the psent till Armes & the gent. who have the power over them be come downe. The second is, The Garrisons of the Enemyes keep the Countrys greatly in awe both for hindering of Contribucon and their rising, in Sumersetshire, Bristoll, Bridgwater, Castle of Taunton and the Castle of Dunster: For the preventing of these inconveniencyces I have taken the best care I can, my Army being much divided, the Lord Roberts being still wth three Regim^{ts} of foote, and two of horse at Barnestaple.¹

¹ Letters received by the Committee of Both Kingdoms, MS., Record Office, vol. ii. I am able to trace to its source an anecdote of the Earl of Essex but little known. Gambling is not peculiar to any age, nor, it seems, are fantastic wagers to the era of the Prince Regent. While the Earl was lying with his army before Exeter at this time, he received news of the battle of Marston Moor, and learnt that, within the city, Sir John Berkeley and the garrison were rejoicing as if for a Royalist victory. Whereupon the Earl sent in a trumpet to Berkeley, offering him that if it turned out so, he, Essex, would surrender Weymouth and Melcombe Regis (then in possession of the Parliament), provided that Berkeley would engage, on the other hand, if Prince Rupert was defeated, to surrender Exeter. The wager was not accepted. This was gravely communicated in a letter from the Earl to the Committee of Both Kingdoms, dated Tiverton, July 15, 1644.

With reference to the levies here alluded to, I find that Colonel Were, in his *Apologie*, published towards the end of the same year, claims to have raised, presumably in his own neighbourhood of Tiverton, "two regiments, one of Horse and one of Foot, without money, when he went with Essex into Cornwall." ¹

It was whilst Essex was at Tiverton that he became first aware of the significance of the King's sudden southward march from Worcestershire, which began on the 12th of July. He rightly divined that the king was in pursuit of him. "My Lord Roberts [wrote Essex on the 18th of July, from Tiverton] returned from Barnstable yesternight, and we were resolved to have marched this day towards P. Maurice & soe westward, but upon notice y^e King was come to Bathe a Council of Warre was called," &c.² Lord Digby, who was with the King's army, writing the day before, says, "We are . . . not out of hopes to crush Essex betwixt Prince Maurice's army and ours before Waller can incommode us, who, for aught we can hear, is yet about Warwick, and likely, if he follow us suddenly, to follow us weak. If he stay to gather up and join other forces, probably he may be with us too late, so that we are not unlikely, by God's blessing, to have a fair blow for it in these parts." ³ Waller, however,

¹ *The Apologie of Colonell John Were, &c., King's Pamphlets*, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxxxv.

² Letters received by the Committee of Both Kingdoms, MS., Record Office, vol. ii.

³ Printed in Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, ii. 477.

did not follow the King into the West. In this perplexity, Essex held the council of war; and three proposals were submitted to it—whether he should march back to meet his Majesty's forces; whether he should sit down before Exeter; or whether he should "rouse and disperse" the Royalist forces in Cornwall which were harassing Plymouth. The "unskilfulness" of Essex, which seems to have been apparent to Lord Digby, led him to yield to a disastrous resolve. The military critic tells us that the first course should have been undoubtedly the one adopted, but the last and worst was determined on by the majority of the council.

Prince Maurice broke up from Okehampton on the 19th of July, and fell back with all his forces to Heavitree, on the other side of Exeter. The Prince, Sir Edward Walker says, was not then aware of the advance of the King, who had just entered Somersetshire, but was manœuvring to check Essex.¹ On the way, he narrowly escaped coming into contact with the advanced guard of Essex's army, which, after its inaction of more than a fortnight at Tiverton, was at length in motion, and on its march to Crediton, early in the morning of the 20th. The inaction is perhaps accounted for by the three-cornered dilemma and divided counsels. The opportunity of crushing Prince Maurice's army at Okehampton had been lost.

Lord Digby, writing from Exeter a few days later, supposed that it was the purpose of Essex to intercept the Prince—"Essex . . . thought with a

¹ *Historical Discourses*, p. 42.

swift march in the night to have surprised him, or clapped betwixt him and Exeter, of which he missed but very little. But the Prince, by good intelligence, got an hour before him in his retreat to Exeter, by which miss Essex was cast westward of us both."¹ But as the whole of the Parliamentary army, with its impedimenta,² was on the march, it is more than probable that Lord Digby's assumption that it was the purpose of Essex to strike a flank blow at Prince Maurice was an after-thought.

Resting during the night of the 21st of July at Bow, the Parliamentarians reached Okehampton on the 22nd, on which day the local diarist records:—

The Earle of Essex came with the L. Roberts and the Parliament Army to a very great number, and very many carriages, but tarried but one night.³

The march was continued on the following day to Tavistock. Sir Robert Pye, who had been employed with Colonel Blake in the capture of Taunton, coming up, had a skirmish with some of the Prince's Horse, in the neighbourhood of Okehampton, on the 24th.⁴

At Tavistock a party was detailed by Essex to attack Fitzford, the neighbouring fortified house of Sir Richard Grenville, a personage then and after-

¹ Printed in Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii. 2.

² It was reported that the baggage train consisted of more than 350 carriages, for which 2,000 draught horses were employed. "Roberts's Diary," *Trans. Dev. Assoc.*, x. 326.

³ "Rattenbury's Journal," Bridges's *Okehampton*, p. 95. ⁴ *Ibid.*

wards peculiarly obnoxious to the Parliamentary party. This remarkable man, who became a conspicuous figure in Devonshire during the remainder of the war, was a younger brother of Sir Bevill Grenville who had fallen at Lansdown; but he possessed none of the chivalric virtues for which Sir Bevill was famous. He was born at Stow in the year 1600. At the outset of his career, when a youth, he earned in the military school of the Netherlands a reputation as a soldier, which his enemies never at any time denied to him. He served in the expedition to Cadiz in 1625, and subsequently in the equally disastrous one to the Isle of Rhé. He owed his advancement to the patronage of the Duke of Buckingham, and was knighted and created a baronet. He married a wealthy widow, the owner of Fitzford in her own right. Before the Civil War he had held a command in the Irish Expedition, and on his return received the thanks of Parliament by the mouth of the Speaker for his services. When the Civil War broke out he was given a troop of Horse in the service of the Parliament; but in what way he was employed in the earlier period of the war is not apparent. He first becomes notorious by a splendid act of perfidy. In order, it is said, to obtain his arrears of pay and the return of his horses, which for some reason had been withheld from him, he "openly, before the House of Commons, as a further testimony of his real affection to the Parliament, made a serious protestation that he would never take up arms against but for the Parliament, and die in the defence of them with

his last drop of blood." ¹ He obtained what he wanted. Early in the year to which we are now come, he was given the command of the Horse under Sir William Waller, who was preparing to advance (as was then the intention) into the West of England. He also received from Parliament a sum of money for his equipage, "in which," says Lord Clarendon, "he always affected more than ordinary lustre." With an advanced party of Horse, and travelling, himself, in a coach drawn by six horses, accompanied by other stately appointments, Grenville set out from London; but instead of proceeding to Sir William Waller's rendezvous, as directed, he went to Oxford, and placed himself and his party of Horse at the disposal of the King. All Waller's plans, which had been confided to him, were, of course, forthwith divulged at the Royalist head-quarters. There was a good deal of changing sides during the war, but there had been nothing, as yet, parallel to this except the desertion of Sir Faithful Fortescue, ² who had gone over with his troop from the Parliamentary to the Royalist army in the midst of the battle of Edgehill. The same excuse has been made for both: that they were Royalists at heart, but having been employed by the Parliament before any disruption was thought of, only awaited the best opportunity—for their own personal interests—of declaring their real sentiments. The Parliamentary press was

¹ *A Perfect Diurnall*, Sept. 25–Oct. 2, 1643, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. x.

² He was a North Devon man, and he and Sir Richard Grenville were born at places within fifteen miles of each other; the former at Buckland Filleigh, and the latter at Stow.

furious at the treachery of Grenville, and piled up its choicest epithets on the traitor; he was not only that, but a "Turke, Infidell or limme of the Devill." Grenville soon left the Court for the West, ostensibly to help Colonel Digby, who was then besieging Plymouth, but really, it was said, for the purpose of sequestering the estates of his wife, who was at that time residing in London, and "much affected to the Parliament."

On the discovery of Grenville's treachery, Parliament, not to be outdone in the use of the language of vituperation, solemnly denounced him as, "Traytor, Rogue, Villain and Skellum,"¹ in a proclamation, copies of which were affixed with all possible circumstances of ignominy to two gibbets, one over against the Royal Exchange, and the other in Palace Yard, Westminster.

Sir Richard Grenville was as magnificent in his tastes as his contemporary, the Marquess of Newcastle; he was as audacious in his projects as a modern Brunel. At one time he proposed to cut a channel across the isthmus from Barnstaple to the English Channel, and let the sea into it, for the purpose of keeping Devon and Cornwall safe for the King. Such were his eccentricities. Lord Clarendon alludes to his vanity and ambition. His greatest faults were developed in his military character; he represented the worst type of the Cavalier. He was

¹ The precise meaning of the opprobrious term "Skellum" has given rise to some discussion. It was undoubtedly derived from the Dutch. According to Mr. Rider Haggard, who uses the word in his novel of *Jess*, it is still in vogue in Dutch South Africa, and means *vicious beast*.

oppressive, high-handed, unscrupulous, and cruel even to brutality, and the name of "Skellum Grenville" became for the remainder of the war a terror in the Western Counties.

Fitzford, which is better known as the scene of one of Mrs. Bray's romances, was stormed and taken on the 23rd of July, quarter being given to all the garrison except the Irish. Two pieces of cannon, a quantity of arms, and 150 prisoners fell into the hands of the captors, besides "excellent pillage to the value of £3,000 and provisions a great quantity."¹ While this was going on Sir Richard Grenville, who had been directing the blockade of Plymouth, abandoned his works before that town, and passed into Cornwall by Saltash.

The Earl of Essex continued his march on the 26th, advancing to the Tamar at two points, Newbridge and Horsebridge. At Newbridge, Grenville's force, consisting of three regiments of Foot, Colonel Acland's, Colonel Fortescue's, and Colonel Carew's, was in position to dispute the passage. A "hot encounter" ensued, in which the Parliamentarians lost about forty men. But the bridge was carried, and Essex's army entered Cornwall.²

¹ *A Perfect Diurnall*, July 29-Aug. 5, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xiii.

² Both Rushworth (*Collections*, v. 691) and Whitelock (*Memorials*, ed. 1682, p. 92) mention this affair. It is somewhat remarkable, however, that Hals, the old Cornish antiquary, who describes Grenville's movements on leaving Plymouth, and derived his information orally from several old men who had been officers in Grenville's army, not only does not say a word about it, but intimates rather that Grenville's object was to "shun or avoid" Essex, fearing, as well he might, that "he was not strong enough to engage his great army" (see Davies

From Bodmin, on the 31st of July, Lord Roberts wrote to Colonel Bennet at Barnstaple, the main object of his doing so being to order him with his regiment, if he had raised it (which was not at all probable, considering the shortness of the time), to join the Parliamentary army. It was too late, however, as the King's forces already blocked the road, and Colonel Bennet remained in Barnstaple, as we shall see later; but there is no mention in the Summary of any men being under his command in the garrison at this time. The letter is of sufficient interest to find a place here:—

SR

I hope yo^r Regym^t is in such a forwardnes & the Towne of Barnestaple & country about so well furnished as you & yo^r men may bee spared without prejudice to the Town or Country, w^{ch} if it may bee I desire you to advance wth yo^r men assone as may bee towards mee, and that you will use yo^r best endeavours to understand if y^e Kings movem^t & Prince Maurices as also wher S^r W^m Waller is & y^t hereof you would advertise mee assone as you gott any

Gilbert's *Parochial History of Cornwall*, 1838, iv., 185). This view is certainly supported by the statement of Sir Edward Walker, who had exceptional opportunities of knowing the facts. Mentioning *Horsebridge* as the only point of passage, he says that it was broken down and held by Sir Richard Grenville for a while, but implies clearly enough that there was no fight, inasmuch as he remarks that "a small number might have given a stop to a far greater army than Essex had then," and that "the quitting of this bridge gave him the conveniency of coming over *without the least opposition*" (*Historical Discourses*, pp. 48, 49).

certayne informaçon I have nothing now to add but of my
being

Yo^r very affectionate friend

Bodmyn 31^o

JNO. ROBERTES.

July 1644.

For Colonell Bennett
at Barnstaple these.

[Indorsed by Colonel Bennet]

Lo. Roberts frō Bodmin
about my Regim^t

July 31. 1644.¹

The King, with an army originally not inferior to that of the Earl of Essex in strength, and now increased by the accession of Lord Hopton with a contingent from the garrison of Bristol, was advancing slowly through Somersetshire. His immediate apprehension for the safety of the Queen had been removed, and the anticipation of coming up with Essex at Exeter necessitated caution. The advance had not been remarkable for its celerity. Owing, I suppose, to the badness of the roads, although it was summer, one day's march of sixteen miles, an uncommonly long one, had occupied twenty-one hours, "without any bayte," as Symonds, who was himself in the army, feelingly remarks.² In the seventeenth century there appears to have been three main overland approaches to Devonshire from the north and east in ordinary use; of these, the road from Bristol to Exeter was blocked at Taunton, which

¹ Philipps MSS. (Thirlestaine House, Cheltenham), Bennet Correspondence, No. 11, 105, art. 41.

² *Symonds's Diary*, Camden Society, p. 28.

was held by a strong Parliamentary garrison under the resolute Colonel Blake. The royal army advanced from Bath along the well-beaten Fosseway, on which Celtic warriors and Roman legionaries had marched centuries before, by Ilchester, reaching Honiton on the 25th and Exeter on the 26th of July. The trained bands of Devonshire were summoned to join the royal colours while the King was in Exeter ; it is not surprising that of these much-distracted "trainers," alternately pressed by King and Parliament, only a few came in.

Prince Maurice's army had returned to Crediton after Essex's departure. There, in the Lord's meadow, it was reviewed, 4,500 strong, and, it is stated, in the finest order, on Saturday the 27th by the King in person, who afterwards, attended by his own troop of Horse, proceeded to Bradninch, where he supped and passed the night at the house of Mr. Sainthill. On the following day, Sunday, the whole of the King's army advanced to Crediton, and on the Monday resumed the pursuit of Essex, the Prince's army being a day's march in front.

The King travelled in his coach, and was accompanied in this expedition by the young Prince of Wales. On the line of march through this part of Devonshire there were no great country houses in which Royalty could, willingly or unwillingly, have been entertained. That night the King was lodged at Bow in the village alehouse. On the following day the army reached Okehampton, and the King was "put up" by Mr. Rattenbury the town-clerk, the diarist to whom I have been indebted for some

valuable local notes. Mr. Rattenbury lived in an ancient house which had belonged apparently to the Courtenay family.¹ He does not seem to have been much impressed by the unexpected honour done him, as he makes no allusion to it in his diary, merely recording that on the 29th of July "King Charles came with many lords and his Army staid one night." He also mentions that "Mr. Mayor gave to his Matys servants twenty pounds being . . . required by them with much earnestness."² This transaction is scarcely saved by a euphemism from inevitable comparison with the plundering for which a soldier had been duly hanged at Bow the day before. The cupidity of his Majesty's servants may have been sharpened by the constrained generosity of the Mayor of Exeter, who had presented the King with £500 in gold, the Prince with £100, and the Prince's servants with £20.

The march was continued on the following day to Lifton, the army passing over the open downs which had been the scene of Lord Hopton's disaster of the previous year. Launceston, which had been temporarily occupied by a detachment from Essex's army, was found to have been evacuated. On the 1st of August, five days only after the enemy had preceded them, the whole of the King's forces crossed the Tamar at Polston Bridge and entered Cornwall, the King "staying a while" in Launceston during the operation.

While these considerable and eventful movements

¹ *Symonds's Diary*, Camden Society, p. 42.

² "Rattenbury's Journal," Bridges's *Okehampton*, p. 95.

were passing in another part of the county, the new garrison of Barnstaple, entertaining, it may be, the idea which was then prevalent elsewhere that the Earl of Essex was "in a probable way" to reduce the West wholly to the obedience of Parliament, were not idle in the cause. Bideford, according to the *Mercurius Aulicus*, had at the time a very good Royalist garrison—a statement for which there is no corroboration, and the truth of which the ensuing incident leaves questionable. It is certain, however, that the Fort at Appledore, which had been surrendered to Colonel Digby by the Parliamentarians in September of the previous year, was held by a small detachment of soldiers put into it by Prince Maurice after the revolt of Barnstaple "to make the river useless to that town."¹

There is little doubt that the remains still to be seen on the summit of Staddon Hill around the base of which cluster the irregular houses, picturesque as seen from a distance, but redolent of maritime associations when approached, which form the western prolongation of the town of Appledore, indicate the position of this work. The outline was evidently quadrangular with bastions at the angles, one of which, with traces of a revetment, is tolerably well preserved. There is not a vestige of a tradition now attached to it. At the outbreak of the war it was occupied, as we know, in the interest of Parliament; but whether it was constructed at that time, as the Rev. J. Watkin, the historian of Bideford, implies, or had been in existence previously,

¹ Walker's *Historical Discourses*, p. 65.

which appears to me the more probable supposition, is unknown. The position is one from which there is an uninterrupted panoramic view of sea and land. With the artillery even of those days the fort must have commanded the entire estuary of the Taw and Torridge—in the old maps called Barnstaple Water.¹ The *Mercurius Aulicus* went so far as to declare that it made Barnstaple “a mere inland Towne.” The fort, although of small size, was garrisoned by about forty men. These were Cornishmen—probably the “underground men,” that is, miners, who, as the result showed, well knew how best to secure themselves in such an isolated work which could have been little more than a redoubt. How many guns were mounted in the fort is nowhere stated.

It is easy to understand that the fort may have been an offence to the essentially mercantile community of Barnstaple, and that it may have inflicted annoyance and actual injury upon the shipping which necessarily had to pass under its guns when entering or leaving the port. There was probably a cessation of most of the foreign trade and of the resort to the Newfoundland fishery, but the coasting traffic with Bristol and with Wales, from which coal and limestone were brought, was a matter of every-day concern to the town.

Towards the end of July, with the object of getting rid of this annoyance, the troops composing the garrison of Barnstaple, then under the

¹ “Barnstabell Water,” in *A Plott of all the Coast of Cornwall and Devonshire as they were to be fortified in 1588 against the landing of any Enemy*. Taken from the original in the Cottonian Library, by John Pine, Engraver, London, 1739.

command of Colonel John Luttrell, proceeded in force to attack Appledore Fort. It may be conjectured that this was a boat-expedition; the distance from Barnstaple by water was only seven miles, and the approach by land would have been very circuitous. The enterprise seems to have been less easy of execution than had been calculated upon. The attack resolved itself, after the failure of a surprise, into a regular siege, during which the assailants appear to have suffered heavily. The siege degenerated into a close blockade. The defenders ultimately were "much straitened both for bread and fresh water"—as well they might have been, considering the situation of the fort on the summit of a hill—and had no chance of conveying intelligence of their condition through the lines of their besiegers. A certain colonel, who is stigmatized covertly as "no Cornishman," had been entrusted with the victualling of the fort, but had neglected this duty. Although Bideford was scarcely more than two miles distant, no help seems to have come to the beleaguered fort from the Royalist garrison, stated to have been there at that time; from which it may not unreasonably be inferred that the garrison, if any, was weak and powerless. In these circumstances the critical position of the garrison attracted even the King's attention; "by his Majesty's direction," according to Sir Edward Walker, a party of Horse and Foot, under the command of Colonel Sir Allen Apsley, was sent by Sir John Berkeley from Exeter on the 17th of August, arrived on the scene on the 20th, and forced

the besiegers to retire hastily to Barnstaple. The garrison, adds Sir Edward Walker, "had during the siege slain and wounded many more than 100 of those rebels."¹ In his customary style the editor of the *Mercurius Aulicus* improves upon this comparatively sober account of the transaction:—"The well beaten rebels fled home to Barnstaple . . . being so piteously wearied out that they were glad so faire an occasion made them quit their siedge, the valiant Cornish in the Fort having *killed above six score* of them, besides wounded, and those that ran away during the siedge."² As this authority is certainly not an impartial one, nor distinguished for its veracity, and as the particulars appeared in print at Oxford only four days after the event, it may be conjectured that the losses sustained by the Barnstaple force were, as usual in the first excitement of such intelligence, largely exaggerated. The only other diurnal which mentioned the affair, a Parliamentary print, gave no particulars, but alleged that the abandonment of the siege of the fort by the Barnstaple men was "by occasion of the late accident"—which, if it meant anything, alluded to an event presently to be described, but which certainly had not at that time happened.³

¹ *Historical Discourses*, p. 65. Sir Edward Walker was with the King during this campaign, and acted as his Secretary. He wrote his "Discourses" often on the drum-head, dictated, or at all events daily revised, by King Charles himself.

² *Mercurius Aulicus*, Week ending August 24, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxxiii.

³ *Mercurius Civicus*, No. 68, Sept. 5-11, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxxii.

There occurred, just at this time, an almost dramatic interlude, the scene of it in North Devon, which is characteristic of the high-handed proceedings of Sir Richard Grenville. A mysterious paragraph in *The True Informer*, a Parliamentary diurnal, of July 6-13, had notified that "it was advertized by Letters out of the West that a great Person of note, and an eminent officer under His Majesty, was come in to his Excellencie the Earle of Essex."¹ The allusion (put in connection with the other circumstances which follow) was undoubtedly to the Earl of Bath. That such a rumour was afloat is apparent from the fact that on the mere suspicion of the Earl's insincerity, and although the Bouchier and Grenville families had been on terms of the greatest intimacy, Sir Richard Grenville sent Captain Edward Roscorrock to Tawstock House with a warrant, which, alleging that divers officers of his Majesty's army had lost their horses by hard duty, that the Earl of Bath had forty or fifty horses and men, that neither he nor any of them had appeared at the *Posse*, that he had not given any advice or encouragement by letter or otherwise, and (worst of all) that, as he (Sir R. Grenville) was informed, he had protection from the Earl of Essex, authorized him, the said Roscorrock, to search for and take six of the Earl of Bath's horses, whereof a grey horse called York is especially named. The morose Earl was no soldier, which may account for these shortcomings if true, but he was not the one to

¹ King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxvi.

submit tamely to the indignity; he therefore complained directly to the King. Sir Richard, called upon to explain, excused himself, and submitted whether it was not with sufficient reason that he had so acted? Nothing could have been more graceful than the soothing letter which thereupon Lord Digby, on the part of the King, wrote to the incensed Earl—the King would be very sensible of any disrespect offered to one of his, the Earl of Bath's, quality, and asks him not to press the matter, and not to take too much to heart the roughness of a soldier. The sequel is not revealed; but I think it may be inferred that the much-coveted "York" was returned to his stable at Tawstock.¹

The course of the history of the Civil War in the West now brings us near another important crisis in the affairs of Barnstaple. Little or no light can be thrown on the state of affairs in the town during its military occupation by the detachment from the Earl of Essex's army. The local records of this period yield no information whatever. The civil government was probably superseded by, or at least subordinated to, the military, especially now that, as we have seen, the Mayor himself, like Sir Hudibras, "rode a colonelling." It is certainly remarkable that during this period of two months

¹ The papers from which these particulars have been taken are in the possession of the Earl de la Warr. See *Fourth Report of the Historical MSS. Commission*. The Earl is the lineal representative of Lionel Cranfield, third Earl of Middlesex, who married the Earl of Bath's widow.

and a half, in which Barnstaple was again held in the Parliamentary interest, no effort seems to have been made to repair the defences, which, to a considerable extent, might have been still made available; and more than half of the guns remained unmounted and lying on the quays. The casual evidence upon which this assumption has been founded will be presently given. The inference from all that we know of this apparently anomalous state of things may be that the Corporation had no inclination again to invite attack or a possible siege by a demonstration of their defences, and that they were sagaciously awaiting events occurring not very far off—events upon the development of which the immediate fortunes of Barnstaple were very likely to turn. But, in the mean time, the local forces in garrison were maintained, and of course at a very considerable cost to the inhabitants, as this extract from the Summary which occurs next in order will show :—

In Money and Quarters of 374 Soldiers					
under Col. Luttrell, 11 weeks from July 1					
to Sept. 17, 1644	...	...	...	...	£708 0 0
For Money which Col. Luttrell raised in					
the Town	..	...	...	...	160 0 0

Of all the incidents of the Civil War in Devonshire, those which have received less illustration from the local historian are the military operations which affected the county in the latter part of the summer of 1644. If the omission of any adequate reference to them is to be attributed to the patent

fact that these manœuvres were extraneous, so to speak, and had their impulse from beyond the county which was only accidentally their theatre, and that they bore no comparison in interest with the contests of the previous year, which were almost entirely fomented in the two most westerly counties, and were fought on local lines, the explanation would perhaps suffice. The truth is that the campaign of this year left the greater part of the county untouched. Exeter and Dartmouth did not change hands, and remained Royalist. Plymouth continued to be held by the Parliamentarians. There was no longer a field-force of either party which had not been absorbed into the armies. It was only in the northern part of the county that any disturbance of the *status quo ante* took place; and the issue of the campaign, as it affected North Devon, has been left hitherto undescribed.

The *Court Mercurie*, a Parliamentary newspaper, of August 10-21, alludes, in its budget of the week, to the tension of public feeling existing in London at this time—"The Towne is bigge with expectation of newes from the West." Sir Philip Stapylton, the commander of Essex's life-guard, had been sent from Tavistock to report to the House of Commons the triumphant progress of the Lord General's army. By and by, when Essex's own letters, appealing for help, reached Parliament, the truth became known, and the sanguine expectations of the Londoners were dashed to the ground. Again Essex wrote—"If succour come not speedily we shall be put to great extremity; if we were in a

country where we could force the enemy to fight, it would be some comfort, but this country consists so much upon passes that he who can subside the longest must have the better of it ; which is a great grief to me who have the command of so many gallant men.”¹

Sir William Waller’s army had been too much weakened by desertion to be in any condition to follow the King. The infantry, composed chiefly of Londoners, who could never be kept long under arms, and whose cry was always, after a short service, “ Home ! Home ! ” had melted away after the affair of Cropredy Bridge. Now, in hot haste, Sir William Waller was ordered to detach Lieutenant-General John Middleton, with 3,000 Horse and dragoons, to go to the assistance of Essex ; and 4,000 more were to be sent speedily after him.²

Middleton, a Scot, although at this time only about twenty-four years of age, was already a distinguished Parliamentary officer ; he had commanded a brigade which suffered most at the battle of Cropredy Bridge. By the time when he reached Devonshire his force was reduced to 2,000 men. In Somersetshire, when endeavouring to intercept a convoy of provisions passing from Bristol to Exeter for the King’s army, he had fallen in with a party of Royalist Horse, under Sir Francis Dodington, and, according to Lord Clarendon, had received such a check that he withdrew his force to Sherborne in order to refresh.³ Such, however, was not the version of the

¹ Whitelock’s *Memorials*, p. 96.

² *Ibid.*, p. 94.

³ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 532 b.

affair given by the Parliamentary intelligencers, who called it a "beating" given to Dodington. Middleton himself wrote to the Committee of Both Kingdoms—"I have driven Sr Francis Dorington, wth eight other Colonells to Mynhead. . . . I have always partyes out towards Devonshire and am tomorrow to advance to Chard. . . . This party now under my Comand consists of 15 hundred Horse & neere upon 500 Dragoones." This letter is dated, "Ilchester, 20 August. 1644."¹ The affair must have taken place in the second week of August. Again advancing on his mission, Middleton entered Devonshire at Honiton on the 27th of the month; but he was too late to be of any further service to Essex.

Sir Francis Dodington, a Somersetshireman (whose name is more often, but erroneously, spelt *Dorrington* in the contemporary notices), was one of the trio of unscrupulous Royalist commanders who, at one time or another during the war, by the military license which they permitted or encouraged, made the very name of Cavalier odious in Devonshire. While the King was passing through Somersetshire in July, Dodington was besieging Woodhouse, the fortified house of a Mr. Arundel. The place was taken almost under the eyes of the King, who had sent from Bath a party of Foot and two cannon to Dodington's assistance. As an act of retaliation for the execution of some Irish prisoners by the Parliament, Dodington hanged fourteen of the inmates,

¹ Letters received by the Committee of Both Kingdoms, MS., Record Office, vol. ii.

"men of good estate and quality," after they had surrendered upon quarter.¹ He is said to have shot "an honest minister," one Mr. James, near Taunton, whom he met on the highway, for no better reason, it appears, than that he disliked the minister's creed.² Dodington was one of the seven who afterwards were scheduled by the Parliament to be expressly excepted from pardon at the treaty of Newport.

Dodington's movements after the skirmish in Somersetshire are only explicable on the theory that he was retreating before the advance of Middleton's superior force. It was known on the 22nd of August to the Committee of Both Kingdoms at Derby House, who were then directing the operations of the Parliamentary armies, that he had with him 1,000 Horse,³ an estimate which is precisely confirmed by the information possessed at the King's headquarters.⁴ On the 20th of August, the same day on which the fort at Appledore was relieved, Dodington's troopers appeared before Ilfracombe. He had avoided Barnstaple, although at that moment it was in an ill condition to resist any sudden attack; and it may be conjectured that he had made his way across Exmoor from Minehead, to which place, as we have seen, he had been pressed by Middleton.

¹ This seems to have been approved by the King. At all events it is the natural inference from Sir Edward Walker's relation of the act, without any comment—a relation revised by the King himself (*Historical Discourses*, p. 40).

² Nehemiah Wallington's *Historical Notices*, ii. pp. 224, 227.

³ *Manchester's Quarrel with Cromwell*, Camden Society, p. 17.

⁴ *Symonds's Diary*, Camden Society, p. 62.

Ilfracombe, on the north coast of Devon, and within a dozen miles of Barnstaple, has been, for at least a hundred years, a more or less famous seaside resort. To-day, villas of the period and terraces of a little earlier taste cling to the sides of its rugged hills, courting the soft airs of the Atlantic here prevailing nearly all the year round. In the middle of the seventeenth century it was little more than one long, straggling street, which, starting from the little rock-bound harbour, where the houses clustered more thickly, climbed a spur of one of the hills, and extended along the side of a valley towards the parish church. Its population was chiefly of the seafaring class. The same influences which elsewhere in Devonshire swayed the minds of the town populations predominated here, and the inhabitants of Ilfracombe had taken the Parliamentary side. Although lying outside and indeed remote from what had been the area of actual contest it seems that the town had been quietly put in some way of defence. It possessed a fort, the name of which, "Ilfracombe Castle," indicates that it had been built in Tudor times, for the protection of the harbour and its shipping, when Dunkirkers, Biscayans, and Algerine pirates haunted the entrance of the Bristol Channel. The situation of this work cannot with any certainty be now determined, but it is probable that it occupied the site of the present Quayfield House and grounds, on the steep acclivity which rises above the harbour. A drawing by Mr. Tippetts, engraved in 1774, represents on this spot a castellated building which may possibly

have been a restoration of the original fort. The road from Exmoor through Combmartin, by which it may certainly be conjectured that Dodington approached Ilfracombe, passed under the walls of the castle, on its landward side, before entering the town.

Sir Francis Dodington attempted to seize this work and was apparently repelled ; but he entered the town and set it on fire, actually burning twenty-seven houses. His troopers were ultimately beaten off, however, by the townsmen and sailors, after a fight in which many of the assailants were killed, and which, considering the odds against them, redounded considerably to the credit of the sturdy defenders.

It is an illustration of the remarkable obscurity which hangs over the events of this year in Devonshire that the incident just related is to be found mentioned, so far as an extensive research may be relied upon, in one only of the contemporary news-sheets—*The Kingdom's Weekly Intelligencer*, of Aug. 27—Sept. 3.¹ No date is assigned to the incident, which of course must have been, anyhow, before the end of August ;² but it is supplied by the trustworthy evidence of the parish register of Ilfracombe, which contains the following interesting entry of burials on the 21st of August, and fixes the actual day of the fight as the 20th :—

¹ King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxxii.

² In Stewart's *Ilfracombe Handbook*, section—"Archæology of North Devon," pp. 44, 45, this affair is erroneously supposed to have been identical with one which took place in the following month.

Peter Harris	} Slain in fight 20th day.
John Skinner, Sen.	
Thomas Latchford	
Thomas Knight	
John Estway	
Robert Estway	
Nathaniel Moule	
John Skinner, Jun.	
John Davies	
William Davis	
Flourence Abatha	

The 20th of August is the very day on which General Middleton was writing from Ilchester that he had driven Dodington to Minehead.

Defeated in this attempt Dodington retired. It is not apparent what route he took, but he must have again avoided Barnstaple. Three weeks later we shall find him in the centre of the county.

The manœuvring of the Royalist armies throughout the month of August around the forces of the Earl of Essex, which were shut up in a pound, as Fuller says, at Lostwithiel, in Cornwall, is the despair of the military critic. There was very little fighting. If, as the Duke of Alva is said to have remarked, the true test of generalship is to gain all the advantages of victory without ever giving your opponent a chance to fight, then Charles might apparently be credited with the faculty. But there is no reason to assume anything of the kind; it is more likely that the situation was owing to the military incapacity of the Parliamentary commander-in-chief opposed to him.

The Earl of Essex, disregarding the instructions of the Parliament—it was suspected from a personal unwillingness to meet the King—had marched off with his army nearly two hundred miles, having no adequate or definite purpose, into a *cul-de-sac*. He was now, by the perversity which seems to wait upon human affairs, confronted by his Majesty, who had run him to earth. Early in August, Essex's troops which had at first been extended from Fowey to Bodmin were concentrated around Lostwithiel. The three Royalist armies, the King's, Maurice's, and Grenville's (for each acted independently), had closed in upon him, with the result that the Parliamentarians found themselves in a corner, jammed against the sea, straitened in their quarters and without means of obtaining supplies, hemmed in by a superior force, and strategically altogether in a perilous position. Lostwithiel, on a small scale, was a prototype of Sedan in 1870.


Essex had no hope of receiving any succour from Waller, and perhaps scorned it; their quarrel was still open. All the blame of the disaster which followed he laid upon Middleton's delay.

On the morning of the 31st of August, before day-break, the greater part of Essex's Horse, led by Sir William Balfour, slipped through the Royalist lines, which were loosely guarded, and escaped. On the following morning, the Earl, accompanied by Lord Roberts, basely deserted the army which he commanded, and taking boat at Fowey, landed at Plymouth. The brave old General Skippon, left in command of the Foot, proposed to his officers that

they should cut their way through the enemy or die in the attempt ; but, as Defoe's *Cavalier* remarks, they "shook their heads at it, for, being well paid, they had at present no occasion for dying." Evacuating Lostwithiel, therefore, and retreating towards Fowey in the vain hope of holding it until they could obtain shipping, the ragged and dispirited Parliamentary Foot, after making a show of fight, surrendered, on the 1st of September, on conditions more favourable to themselves than they were wise from a Royalist point of view. They were allowed to march away with their colours, leaving behind them their artillery and all their arms and ammunition.

Essex's Horse, having escaped previously, had no benefit of the capitulation, and were of course still to be accounted for, and Goring, General of the King's Horse, was at once sent in pursuit. The Parliamentarians appear to have divided into several parties ; one of these crossed the Tamar at Saltash and found refuge in Plymouth. Other parties went in different directions towards the northern part of Devonshire, evidently avoiding Exeter and making for Taunton. Messages were promptly sent from the King's head-quarters to Sir John Berkeley, commander of the Royalist garrison of Exeter, and also to Sir Francis Dodington, directing them to intercept the fugitives. Middleton, the Parliamentary General, was believed to be somewhere in Devonshire with a strong force, and Goring was warned not to follow the pursuit too near him.

I am following the details of these little known, but locally interesting, movements partly because



they re-open a page in the history of Barnstaple which had been entirely lost sight of. Middleton's orders were to relieve Essex; but in the interim, for what purpose is not apparent, he had marched across North Devon, and at this time with his two thousand Horse and dragoons was occupying Barnstaple and the surrounding villages.

Never, surely, had there been such a turmoil throughout Devonshire as in that first week of September. Large parties of cavalry, the pursuing and the pursued, were pervading the whole of the western half of the county and spreading alarm in every direction. The escape of Essex's Horse is one of the liveliest episodes in the history of the campaigns in the West. Sir Edward Walker has left a description of it,¹ which is mainly apologetic, and an excuse for Goring's apparent laxity in following up the pursuit. Our local knowledge and other fragmentary notices will supplement the circumstantial details. One body of Parliamentary Horse, after crossing the Tamar, appears to have made at first for Tavistock. A detachment of picked men was sent by Goring to fall upon their rear, but was repulsed, and a few prisoners who had been taken were recovered. This was on the 4th of September. On the same day, as mentioned in a letter which I shall presently quote, the advanced party, said to have been six hundred in number, were met and routed on Hatherleigh Moor by Sir Francis Dodington, who pursued them as far as Little Torrington, where they joined some of Middleton's force posted

¹ *Historical Discourses*, p. 81.

there, and took refuge in Barnstaple the same night.

The main body of Essex's Horse, under the command of Sir William Balfour, got to Crediton, having escaped Goring and eluded Sir John Berkeley, who had advanced with a party from Exeter as far as Chagford without falling in with it. The following extract of a letter from Berkeley to Prince Rupert, at this time, will be of interest :—

EXON. 7^{ber} 4. 5 afternoone.

. . . Notwithstanding all our dilligence, the rest of their horse (neare 2,000) are broken out by us, having passed over the ferry at Saltash and came yesterday at 12 from thence without drawing bridle to Kirton, w^{ch} is (as they passed over the more¹) 40 long and ill miles, they have lost many in the march, and are much tyred, Gen^l Goring is w^hin 8 or 10 miles of them (as I conceive) I have marched 15 miles wth 800 foote and 300 horse, and am now in this place, almost as far advanced eastward as the Rebbells, and shall continue my march this night (if it be possible). I beleeeve the Rebbells will endeavour to march to Taunton and from thence into Dorsetshire, how it will stand in your highnes power to prevent them I am not able to judge, being ignorant where and what force you are.²

Goring, who had taken up his quarters at Okehamp-ton, found time also to write from thence to Prince Rupert; he had been in pursuit of some of Essex's Horse, but excused himself for letting them get out of his reach by reason of his own being tired and disorderly.³

¹ [*I.e.*, Dartmoor.]

² Add. MSS., British Museum, No. 18,981, f. 239.

³ Abstract of Rupert Correspondence in Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, i. 519. The letter is there misdated; it

“At Kyrton [Crediton],” says Sir Edward Walker, “the Rebels’ Horse severed, one part making their Escape towards Lyme and the other went towards Barnstaple and joined with Middleton.”¹ The latter party was in all probability Essex’s life-guard of cuirassiers which, as we know from local sources, came into Barnstaple on the 6th of September. This distinguished troop (which had numbered when at Tiverton on the outward march thirteen officers and one hundred troopers), in the absence of its commander, Sir Philip Stapylton, was under the orders of Captain Doyley. It was a select corps, of which the troopers were gentlemen, or at least persons of consequence; Edmund Ludlow, the author of the memoirs, Ireton, Fleetwood, and Richard Cromwell, rode in it.

Berkeley, having missed the object of his pursuit, turned off to the right and reached Tiverton, where, on the 5th of September, he had a brush with the still retreating main body of the Parliamentary Horse, and “forced them thence disorderly.”

Middleton’s position at Barnstaple was now in the highest degree critical. The following comment written from Exeter at this time sufficiently reveals it :—

Middleton who came down here with Wallers Brigade & hath now under his comand about 3000 horse & dragoons was marching through y^e north of Devon to y^e relief of y^e E of Essex, and it is cons^d is soe farr engaged

should be Sept. 5, not Aug. 15. The substances of this and the next abstract seem to have been transposed.

¹ *Historical Discourses.*

that way that there is little likelihood of his returne, the Countrey being all risen & order given for y^e cutting downe of Trees & stopping of all passages & a great part of y^e Kings Forces being under march towards him.¹

Sir William Waller, writing from Wotton, on the 7th of September, to the Committee of Both Kingdoms, betrays his alarm :—

This bearer Capt. Guilliame came this evening unto me out of Devonshire & brings the sad confirmation of our losse of the Western Army, w^{ch} is doubled to me in y^e desperate Condiçion of my poore Troopes under Lieu^t. General Middleton.²

It is easy to see that Middleton's position was untenable. With a force variously estimated at from two to three thousand Horse he could not have safely shut himself up in Barnstaple while the surrounding country, upon which he would have had to rely for support, was likely to be swept by Goring's and Berkeley's cavalry, superior in number to his own, up to the very entrenchments of the town. Not a trace of his brief occupation of North Devon is to be found in the local records.

On the 5th of September, the same day on which Berkeley was engaged with Balfour's Horse at Tiverton, Middleton hurriedly moved from his quarters at Barnstaple and made direct for Taunton, with the object of falling back into Dorsetshire and

¹ From the "Copy of a Relation of the King's Success in the West. Exeter, Sept. 4, 1644." Add. MSS., British Museum, No. 18,981, f. 241.

² Letters received by the Committee of Both Kingdoms, MS., Record Office, vol. ii.

joining Waller's army. "That night," to take up Sir Edward Walker's narrative, "both Middleton's and Essex's Horse believing themselves to be overpowered prepared for their Escape; which they presently made over Exmore on the North of Devon and so by Dunster to Taunton, not staying at any place until they came there. By that time they were so wearied and over watched ¹ that a very small Number of fresh Horse might have destroyed their great Body. Our Horse were likewise much harassed in this Pursuit and not in a Condition to follow them in their hasty Flight." ² This movement is referred to in a letter of the Committee of Both Kingdoms, of the 11th of September, in which they state that they had that day received intelligence that the Lord General's Horse under Commissary-General Behre had joined those of Middleton, and were marching through Somersetshire.³

The news of the disaster to the Parliamentary forces in Cornwall, the rush of Royalist cavalry back through Devonshire, and the imminent prospect of the return of the King's victorious army through the county, had brought home to the ruling authorities of Barnstaple a sense of their critical position. Whilst in this state of perplexity Middleton appears to have held a consultation with them and to have advised resistance:—

. . . "What thou speak'st drowsily?
Poor knave, I blame thee not; thou art o'er-watch'd."
(Shakspeare, *Julius Cæsar*, act v. sc. 3.)

² *Historical Discourses*, p. 81.

³ *Manchester's Quarrel*, Camden Society, p. 26.

The Town of Barnstable called a Councell of War and a Councell of the Inhabitants, and upon debate it was resolved that they would defend the Town against the Enemy, Lieu. Generall Middleton telling them that all the North of England was reduced into the obedience of the Parliament, except some few garrisons, and that they need not doubt of present supplies, and left [the] Townesmen and Souldiers resolved to hold it to the last.¹

The same night or, at the latest, on the following morning, the 5th of September, Middleton with his flying column took his departure.²

One of the incidents of this remarkable campaign was the march back through Devonshire of Essex's Foot after they had passed under the yoke. It had no influence upon the affairs of Barnstaple, and only a transitory connection with North Devon; but as it has not been noticed, so far as I am aware, by any Devonshire historian the episode strikes me as of sufficient interest to find a place in this relation.

It fell to the lot of Major-General Philip Skippon to lead these five or six thousand beaten soldiers, who, under the articles of the capitulation, were allowed to pass freely to either Poole or Portsmouth. The men were mostly of the London trained-bands. On

¹ *The Parliament Scout*, Sept. 5-13, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxxii.

² Lieut.-General John Middleton, of whom we here take leave, subsequently went over to the Royal cause, and led the cavalry of Charles II. at the battle of Worcester in 1651. After the Restoration he was raised to the peerage as Earl of Middleton. He was ultimately Governor of Tangier, and died there in 1673. (Evelyn's *Diary and Correspondence*, ed. 1850, ii. 24, 380.) He is generally confounded with Sir Thomas Middleton of Chirk Castle—notably so in the Index to the fine Oxford edition of Clarendon's *Rebellion*, 1849.

Monday, the 2nd of September, the day after the surrender, "about 10 of the clock," they set out with only their staves in their hands; and "Skippon first or in the front," says Richard Symonds of the King's troop of Horse, who was an eyewitness of the scene, "marched with all that rowt of rebels, after the colours of their several regiments. . . . It rayned extremely as the varlets marched away . . . so durty and dejected as was rare to see."¹ Colonel Were's Tiverton regiment was one that Symonds saw marching off. The colonel himself had gone over to the King—as the best thing that he could do. Abused and insulted by the King's soldiers, they met with further rough treatment, when passing through Lostwithiel, from the Cornish women who owed them no goodwill, and who, moreover, stripped the shirts from off the backs of the sick and maimed who were left behind.² The story of their subsequent sufferings on the march has been told with unusually graphic detail by one of their officers in a letter contained in a pamphlet entitled, *A True Relation of the sad Passages between the Two Armies in the West, &c.*, London, Oct. 2, 1644.³ On the Tuesday they passed into Devonshire: "We marched that night," says the writer, "to Bren-farr [Brentor?] where we scarce had the benefit of water; we lay in the open fields that night also it being a bitter rainy night." On the Wednesday, the 4th of September, they advanced towards Okehampton, where

¹ *Diary*, Camden Society, pp. 66, 67.

² *The Parliament Scout*, Sept. 5-13, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxxii.

³ King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxxiv.

they desired to quarter, but when within a mile of the town had news that they must advance no farther, the King's troops being quartered there (these were Goring's men). This was the third day they had marched without victuals, all manner of provisions having been stopped from them. The soldiers lay this night in the fields near the town: "That night a penny loaf would have been sold for half-a-crown and many thanks besides." Goring, they learnt, had sent warrants to the country to bring in provisions for them, which, it is elsewhere remarked, "did as much good as was intended, nothing to the purpose."¹ On Thursday, the 5th of September, they marched from Okehamp-ton by the London road, that they might avoid the King's forces which always lay in their way on purpose to eat up their provisions for them. They came that night to a little village (probably Cheriton Bishop), where they had some accommodation for themselves (*i.e.*, the officers) and the soldiers. Next morning, the 6th, they advanced towards Tiverton, but were forbidden to enter it, for the King's forces were there also (Berkeley's men). They "lay in the hungry fields;" those who had lost their way or straggled were miserably wounded, and some were killed within a little distance of Tiverton. "In all this trouble," concludes the writer, "I observed Major-General Skippon in his carriage; but never did I see any man so patient, so humble, and so truly wise and valiant in all his actions as he."

¹ *The Parliament Scout*, Sept. 5-13, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxxii.

Demoralized as the followers of Skippon must almost inevitably have been, yet a fair proportion—Lord Clarendon, with not unusual inaccuracy says, “not a third part”—of them managed to reach Portsmouth, where they were reclothed and armed. At the second battle of Newbury, which took place on the 27th of the following month, and where they were face to face with their former antagonists, the survivors of Essex’s old army, who had fought so well at Edgehill and at the first battle of Newbury, amply redeemed their reputation, and retook some of the guns which they had lost in Cornwall.

Skippon, “the Christian Centurion,” as he was called by his contemporary admirers, one of the finest characters of the military section of the Parliamentary leaders, has a transient interest for us, inasmuch as, in 1646, he succeeded George Peard, deceased, as one of the Members of Parliament for Barnstaple.

The movements of General Goring have been followed down to the 6th of September, when his force joined that of Sir John Berkeley at Tiverton. “General Goring,” continues Sir Edward Walker, “stayed at Tiverton [and] refreshed his troops having an Eye on the rebellious Town of Barnstaple, at that time not defensible, being very much unprovided of Ammunition and Men, having only 600 Foot that Essex left there when he went into Cornwall.”¹ Sir Edward’s estimate of the number of foot-soldiers in the garrison of Barnstaple at that

¹ *Historical Discourses*, p. 81.

time was not far wrong ; but those who had been left there by Essex were, as we have seen, not more than one half of the number. He was obviously not then aware of the addition made to the garrison by the Parliamentary Horse.

We are absolutely without any local record of the state of affairs in Barnstaple during this very critical period. There had been apparently a cry for help to Parliament, and Parliament awoke to a sense of the importance of strengthening Barnstaple if it was to be held at all. On the 11th of September the House of Commons ordered :—

That it be referred to the Committee of both Kingdoms, to take care that Barnstaple may be supplied with Ammunition out of the Ammunition left at Lime for the service of the West : And that the Committee may be acquainted, that there are Four Ships now ready to go for Wales ; the which, the House thinks, may conveniently have Order to take in the Ammunition at Lyme, and to convey it to Barnestaple.¹

On the 16th of September there was a further Order :—

That the Lieutenant of the Ordnance do forthwith issue out Fifty Barrels of Powder, for the Service of the Town of Barnstaple.²

Both these orders were too late.

It is only by side-lights that we obtain casual glimpses of the internal state of the town at this time. One of these comes from a contemporary

¹ *Journals of the House of Commons*, iii. 624. ² *Ibid.*, iii. 628.

letter in the De la Warr MSS., which has been printed by the Historical Manuscripts Commission. This letter was written by one "H. Prust" from Stow, to the Countess of Bath, who apparently was not then at Tawstock. Who Prust was, or in what relation he stood to the Grenville family, I am not aware. Prust's information was second-hand; but it gives some probably authentic and certainly very curious and interesting details of the actual condition of Barnstaple when on the very brink of the crisis—if it may not be said in the midst of it. The letter, from which I proceed to quote, was apparently written on Tuesday, Sept. 10,¹ and it will be all the clearer for a little interjected explanation. This is what Prust wrote:—

Last Wednesday [Sept. 4] about 600 of the enemy's horse that came out of Cornwall were beaten in Hathroley [*i.e.*, Hatherleigh] Moor by Sir Francis Dorrington's party, and chased to Little Torr[ington] church ere they made a stand and got a guide to conduct them towards Bristow [*i.e.*, Bristol], who carried them that night to Barn[staple], where Middleton's brigade that was about Torr[ington] guarded them. Thursday [Sept. 5] they rested there, and on Friday [Sept. 6] marcht to Moulton [*i.e.*, South Molton], and the Chiefe of Barn[staple] took occasion to bring them, going with the soldiers and chief commanders, purposing to return no more as the Townsmen suspected, who sent after them, that if they returned not presently they would plunder all their houses. Upon this summons the Burgeis [probably the trained-band] and Luttrell's and Bennett's soldiers

¹ The date, Sept. 20, assigned to the letter by the Commissioners, cannot be correct.

returned. Saturday [Sept. 7] the horse marching over Exmoor espied the strength of His Majesty's horse which they shunned, and scattered themselves it is not known whither, as their guide reports; only about 200 got to Combe [*i.e.*, Ilfracombe] to take shipping. But the Combe men and Barn[staple men] had agreed to stop them, as report goes, and to return them to Barn[staple] to share with their fortune, where they were yesterday [Sept. 9] as an Irish tenant that was went thither to the fair informs me.¹

It is interesting to light upon this casual mention, at a time so dark and distressful for the town, of the Barnstaple Great Fair—an irrepressible institution which, in this present year of grace, retains as much vitality as ever. The fair, which lasted several days, began, before the New Style was in use, on the 8th of September, the day of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary. That day, in the year 1644, being a Sunday, the fair began on the following day, the 9th, as implied in the foregoing letter. As might be expected, in the midst of such a conjunction as at that time beset the affairs of Barnstaple, Prust's informant found that "there was no show of a fair there by any company of the Country."

It would seem from this account that the unanimity which had been brought about by General Middleton's eloquence was only of short duration. The explanation probably is that as soon as the moral support of Middleton's brigade had been with-

¹ *Fourth Report of the Historical MSS. Commission*, 1874, App., p. 308.

drawn, and that something like a siege was threatened, that part of the garrison which had been left by Lord Roberts was disposed to capitulate, in expectation of as favourable terms as the rest of the Parliamentary Foot had obtained. I also infer that this was not the view of the town authorities or of Colonel Luttrell and Colonel Bennet; and that they, rather than submit to a surrender, sought to draw off their own men from the town, or at least were suspected of the intention. Their object, in that case, was probably to throw themselves into Taunton, the nearest Parliamentary garrison town.

Prust, in continuation of his letter, relates that his informant, the Irish tenant of the Grenvilles, did not see at Barnstaple "many soldiers; only six Collectors on their gates." The troopers may, of course, have been out foraging, as was very likely; who or what the "collectors" were I am unable to explain; the "gates" were perhaps those timber barriers, constructed at the several entrances to the town, with reference to which I have already offered some conjectures. He saw "about 30 *ship guns lying on the Key*, many mounted in other places." This statement will be recognized as having given us an insight into the state of the fortifications during the preceding period. He saw no "guards about the town, only one watchman at the bridge, who questioned him not." A picture in no uncertain colours of doubt and irresolution on the part of the leaders. The inhabitants were panic-stricken: "the civil townsmen miserably complain of their fear of sudden

destruction," and the prospect of having their supplies cut off enraged them: "the rabble are still bold that command the country to store them with all manner of provisions, setting a high proportion on your Doctor and sending your honour's boat with others to fetch down your hay in the marshes,"—or such of it, we may perhaps venture to add, as had not been appropriated by Middleton's troopers.

Prust concludes with the information, which he had obtained from a letter written by Sir John Grenville (son of the late Sir Bevill), who was in the King's army, that, as soon as the event of the assault of Plymouth was seen, an army was to be sent to Barnstaple. Whatever may have been the differences between the civil authorities and the Parliamentary officers who had come in with forces to strengthen the garrison—and these I have only been able to infer—the Mayor, Charles Peard, appears to have ultimately had his way. He resolved to hold out. Being short of ammunition, as we are aware, he sent a detachment of Horse to Ilfracombe to endeavour to obtain a supply from thence, with the result, which is thus described in a contemporary report, "advertized out of the West," by a London diurnal:—

The Garrison of Barstaple having resolved as before mentioned to stand it out against the King's forces, but being most perfidiously betrayed by reason of the trechery of the Governour of Melcomb-Castle [*sic*] to whom the Commander in chief of the Towne sending a partie of horse for powder, they were not only denied it, but he turned his

Ordnance against them, and the next day surrendered it to the King's forces.¹

The betrayal of Barnstaple, as it was oddly called, by the Governor of "Melcombe Castle," has been often repeated without any question. But, obviously, the garrison of Barnstaple would not have been likely to send to Melcombe Regis in Dorsetshire for assistance. A copyist or printer blundered, and Ilfracombe Castle was meant. This is sufficiently apparent from another Parliamentary diurnal of the same date:—"The Governour sent a partee of Horse to Coome-castle for powder," &c.² Ilfracombe, locally, is still 'Coombe.

On the following day, the 12th of September, Barnstaple was invested by the troops of General Goring, and summoned to surrender.

Ilfracombe Castle, with twenty pieces of ordnance, as many barrels of gunpowder, and nearly two hundred arms, fell at the same time into the hands of the Royalists—surrendered, without a blow having been struck, by the evidently treacherous commandant, whose name has not been recorded, to his former antagonist, Sir Francis Dodington.³

The estimate held in the highest Parliamentary circles of the importance of Barnstaple as a fortified position at this time may be gathered from the follow-

¹ *The True Informer*, No. 47, Sept. 21-28, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. clxxiv.

Perfect Occurrences of Parliament, Sept. 20-27, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xiv.

³ Sir Edward Walker's *Historical Discourses*. The coincidence of the surrender of Ilfracombe Castle to Sir F. Dodington, who had un-

ing extract. It will be seen that on the stand made by the garrison even the future of the campaign was considered in no small degree to depend :—

Intelligence from the West that the King's forces had summoned Barnstable, where they had an absolute denyall, and what execution was done there are no particulars, but a Message was sent after the King's forces that they were moving : that they were exceeding stiffe in the town and would not yeeld ; and therefore there must be either a great force left before it, or else to passe away and let it quite alone. Upon which it is reported that expresse Charge should be given to Storme the town, and spare none but put all to the sword. It may please God that this may occasion a stay of the King's forces, to give time for our forces to march up towards Langport or Ilminster, &c.¹

The strength of the garrison of Barnstaple was computed by outside intelligencers to be about nine hundred men, which agrees pretty well with the estimate that may be formed from the local data known to us, as follows : Colonel Luttrell's companies (as per Summary), 374 ; the town trained-band (probably) 100 ; Lord Roberts's three companies, 300 ; and the incomplete levies for Colonel Bennet's regiment of Militia, which, according to Mr. Prust, were in the town at this time, and had doubtless been thrown into it by the stress of circumstance since

successfully attacked it three weeks before, will be noticed. It is possible that Sir Edward Walker may have confounded the two incidents. Other accounts merely state that the fort was surrendered to General Goring.

¹ *Perfect Occurrences of Parliament, &c.*, No. 7, Sept. 20-27, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xiv.

the catastrophe to the Parliamentary army in Cornwall, although not mentioned in the Summary, about two hundred more. All these were Foot. Then, there are to be added Essex's life-guard of one hundred Horse and the two hundred Parliamentary Horse who had taken refuge in the town, a reinforcement which had been too recent for the intelligencers to have known anything of; bringing up the whole disposable force in the garrison to at least twelve hundred men.

Considering the extraordinary demands which had been so lately made upon the resources of the town by the passing bodies of Parliamentary troops, it is not surprising that the inhabitants, now strictly invested, were alarmingly straitened for provisions. This was a new experience, and the pressure in consequence is sufficiently evident.

General George Goring, who, on the elevation of his father shortly afterwards to the Earldom of Norwich, became better known by the courtesy title of Lord Goring—was an officer who succeeded more than any other in the King's service in bringing discredit upon the Royalist cause; and Devonshire, unhappily for that county, was the chief scene of his unbridled military excesses. With a full share of the superficial graces and accomplishments, the wit and love of raillery, which characterized the typical roistering Cavalier, he had, at the same time, more than an average share of his profligacy and vices. He was utterly unprincipled; Eliot Warburton, whose standard of personal honour was high, goes so far as to call him "scoundrel" and "villain." As a

commander he was freely censured by his friends for his laxity and recklessness. As a mere soldier he was not despicable; at Marston Moor, only a few weeks before the time which we have reached, he had routed the Scotch contingent which was opposed to him. This is the character of the man—not yet so notorious as he afterwards became—who was now knocking at the gates of Barnstaple.

General Goring established his head-quarters at Raleigh, the residence of Sir John Chichester, Bart., an old mansion long ago destroyed, of which the outlines of the foundations only are now traceable on the turf. Surrounded by a small park, it stood on an elevated plateau within a mile of Barnstaple on its northern side. It looked down on the gray town in the middle distance clustered around the lead-covered spire of the parish church; and beyond the town, southward, might be seen the wide valley of the Taw, with the hanging woods of Tawstock not far distant. Sir John Chichester was a young man, and had only a few months before, on attaining his majority, succeeded to the family estates. He had been created a baronet, in his minority, three years earlier.

The Earl of Bath's house, at Tawstock, was at the same time occupied by Goring's Horse, and thus, both sides of the river being in the hands of patrolling parties of the enemy, the town was cut off from all communication with the country, and effectually isolated.

Richard Pollard,¹ writing to the Countess of Bath

¹ A Richard Pollard of Langley, in the Parish of Yarnscombe, died in 1659.

about this time, assures her that Sir Richard Douglas (one of Goring's officers ?) "is willing to do anything to preserve my lord's house and tenants from the rudeness of the soldiers; yet," says he, "many violences have been offered, and all by means of this rebellious town of Barnstaple." Then, with slightly malicious satisfaction he remarks: "Sir John Chichester, that hath heretofore smiled at others' troubles, hath now had his share amongst us; for the General was quartered at his house, so as many went there for orders; and his house never without two or three hundred soldiers daily eating and drinking there."¹ This is a realizable picture of a country gentleman's house in the time of the Civil War, and it was not uncommon. As for Goring himself, it may be assumed that he found at Raleigh ample scope for the indulgence of what Lord Clarendon called his "jovial exercises." While Cavalier toasts went round and Cavalier songs resounded in the old hall, the common troopers quaffed brown October and Devonshire cider at the buttery-hatch.

There is no record, so far as I have been able to discover, of any fighting. Goring had sufficient force to effect a strict blockade. The same news-sheet which gives 900 as the strength of the garrison states, that it was "strictly besieged with 9,000 of the King's forces; who threatned extream cruelties to them if they yeilded not."² If this estimate of

¹ De la Warr MSS. *Fourth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission*, 1874, App., p. 308.

² *Perfect Occurrences of Parliament*, &c., No. 7, Sept. 20-27, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xiv.

the besiegers' force was anything more than a mere alliteration it must have alluded to the King's army which at that time was lying before Plymouth. The strength of Goring's detachment is nowhere mentioned.

On Friday, the 13th of September, the day after the investment had taken place, Symonds, who was with the King's army, records in his diary—"Came newes to the leaguer that Barnstaple, a garrison of the rebells in this county, of their yeilding to his Majestie, leaving their armes, &c., and marche away with colors, &c." ¹ This entry was premature. Parleying, however, had already taken place, and an overture to treat had come out from the Governor of the town. Being "in great Streights for want of Ammunition and other Provisions," says Sir Edward Walker, and knowing themselves "not in a Condition to withstand a Siege; yet to set the best face on it, they offered to yield the Town on such Conditions as they proposed, which were in general, 'That the Town might have no Garrison put into it; That the Souldiers might march away to Southampton with all their Arms, Colours, and Drums: That the Townsmen might have the Liberty of free Trade: And that the true Protestant Religion should be upheld, and no new Oaths imposed on them, but such as are established by Act of Parliament.' Which," remarks Sir Edward, "I observe the rather to show how miserably they are seduced, this Article implying their Belief that His Majesty in-

¹ *Diary*, Camden Society, p. 81.

tended to introduce another than the Protestant Religion.”¹

It is apparent, I think, from the nature of the propositions, that the overture came from the Corporation—it was not a mere military convention that was put forward. The inevitable religious clause was a capacious proposition; King Charles was perfectly ready to give the required assurance; but whether it satisfied these “True Blades for Religion and Liberties” is another matter. Words, we know, are merely counters, and on what was meant by the “true Protestant religion” more than half of the controversy which then distracted England turned.

“Now although these demands,” continues Sir Edward, who, it may be interesting to remember, is writing under the King’s eye, “were high; yet considering the time of the year, the Remoteness of the Place, and other real Considerations not to engage our Army to besiege it, His Majesty was pleased to condescend to the Terms proposed, and to regain the Allegiance of that Place with the granting those Conditions.”²

Too much reliance need not be placed upon the accuracy of the date in Symonds’s Diary, but it is not improbable that it was the submission of these propositions to the King which gave rise to the rumour in the camp of the surrender of Barnstaple. The royal head-quarters were then at Widey Court. The two armies, the King’s and Prince Maurice’s, were threatening Plymouth without any result, and

¹ *Historical Discourses*, p. 86.

² *ibid.*, pp. 86, 87.

on the 14th, the attack was abandoned and the assailants "with drums beating and colors flying, marched off, leaving the seige. . . . The rogues followed the reare . . . little or no hurt, onely the basest language"¹—which may be imagined; the imprecatory vocabulary of the seventeenth century being exceptionally rich.

The second surrender of Barnstaple took place on the 17th of September, 1644, and the garrison evacuated the town on the same day. The articles of capitulation, of which there are several versions extant, seem to have been substantially those which follow:—

1. To march away with their Colours, Drums, Swords, and all their Muskets, Arms, Bag and Baggage, And every Musqueter 12 Shot.

2. That the Town shall be free from plunder, the Garrison quit, and the Workes demolished and no Garrison made there hereafter.

3. That they should march away with a safe convoy to the Lord Generall to Portsmouth.²

The garrison left behind them, according to Sir Edward Walker, "above fifty piece of Ordnance, many Arms, but little Ammunition."³

¹ *Symonds's Diary*, Camden Society, p. 82.

² *Perfect Occurrences*, &c., No. 7, Sept. 20-27, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xiv. This surrender has been usually called the surrender to General Goring; but as the offer of capitulation was referred to the King as commander-in-chief and accepted by him, it cannot be wrong to adopt upon so high an authority, on such a point, as the Garter King of Arms (Sir Edward Walker) the view which he took of it, that it was a surrender to the King.

³ *Historical Discourses*, pp. 86, 87.

What became of Luttrell's and Bennet's men is nowhere mentioned; but it is probable that they threw in their lot with the rest of the garrison and marched out with them. Colonel Luttrell is stated in the family pedigree to have been killed in action in the same year. Colonel Bennet reappears as one of the Commissioners on the part of Sir Thomas Fairfax of the treaty for the surrender of Pendennis Castle in August, 1646. Subsequently, he was Governor of that fortress under the Commonwealth, and one of Cromwell's Council of State. His correspondence, chiefly of the Commonwealth period, is among the MSS. in the Collection of the late Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bart., now at Thirlestaine House, Cheltenham.

The Parliamentary soldiers who marched out of Barnstaple found their way to Portsmouth, the articles with regard to them having been, it is said, "indifferently well kept." The day of the entry of Goring's troopers into the town, if all be true, was a disastrous one for the inhabitants. The Royalist Horse were admittedly disorganized and out of hand. Instead of performing the conditions, says an authorized Parliamentary diurnal,—“they have broken them all, pillaged our men, plundered the Town, *exempted* the Maier and imprisoned many other of the Inhabitants.”¹ Whitelock, improving upon the somewhat anomalous word in the foregoing paragraph, states that the Mayor was “executed.”²

¹ *A Perfect Diurnall of some Passages in Parliament*, &c., Sept. 23-30, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xiv.

² *Memorials*, ed. 1682, p. 100.

This, however, was certainly not the case, as he is known to have survived for several years. The other information is much in want of confirmation, although it no doubt contains some truth; but on this scene the local records throw no light whatever.

There is no reason to suppose that Goring's force remained in Barnstaple more than a day or two after these events took place.

The distinguished and select troop of Essex's life-guards had entailed a further burden on the inhabitants of Barnstaple, not only for their maintenance during their brief visit, but for their travelling expenses when they left. The items are duly entered in the Summary:—

For quartering of Lord General Essex his				
Life Guards and their Servants, in all 126,				
from 6 to 17 Sept ^r 1644	...	...	...	£69 6 0

In Money paid the L ^d Ge ^l his Life Guards				
at their departure	...	...	...	60 0 0

We are now approaching the end of the valuable record of which, under the title of the "Summary," I have from time to time made use. Its historical accuracy is unimpeachable, and in no single instance (except in the case of manifest errors of copyists) does it show any inconsistency with facts which I have derived from other and undoubtedly authentic sources. The last item, in agreement with a practice which is time-honoured, is made up of "sundries," but this is in no respect inferior to the others in interest or importance.

The Repaire of our Bridge, the demolishing of Houses and laying Wast of Land on which the Fort Lyne and Intrenchments were made, more than £3,000 0 0

The sums of the several items, which it is not necessary to recapitulate, amount altogether to the grand total of upwards of £16,000—equal to three or four times that sum in money of the present time. And this expenditure, it should be borne in mind, is exclusive of all the weekly assessments, martial rates, compulsory loans, and other exactions which were made upon the town by the Royalists during their two occupations, extending together over twice as long a period as that covered by the Summary. It represented only what were considered claims on the Long Parliament. What reception these claims met with may be gathered from the language of the Corporation, when, a few years later, they were again pressing their "little bill" upon the attention of the Rump—"there have been great somes of money disbursed and lent for the service of the Parliament by the inhabitants of this towne of Barnestaple, of which hitherto no restitution hath been made nor any satisfaccion given for the same."¹ Their chances of obtaining any compensation whatever from Parliament had already become desperate, when the Restoration of course finally extinguished them.

¹ *Records, Supplementary*, No. 5.



PART IV.

*FROM THE SURRENDER OF BARNSTAPLE TO THE
KING TO ITS SURRENDER TO SIR THOMAS
FAIRFAX, GENERAL OF THE PARLIA-
MENTARY FORCES.*

September 17, 1644—April 14, 1646.

ON the same day on which the garrison of Barnstaple marched out with drums beating, colours flying, and the other honours of war, King Charles, in advance of his army, after resting the previous night at Okehampton, dined at Crediton, and afterwards entered Exeter "in greater state than ordinary," as became a monarch returning from a successful expedition. The King's troops reached Exeter in a miserable plight. "I am well assured," says Sir Edward Walker, who accompanied the King, "that of above 4,000 of the King's Army of Foot and 4,500 of Prince Maurice's when they first joined at Crediton, the first was at this time much diminished, and the other not half that Number;

Besides our Horse was much harassed, and discontented for want of Pay." ¹ The Commissioners of the county for levying the King's martial rates were forthwith obliged to make provision; and before the army could leave Devonshire £2,000 had to be requisitioned, in money, "to satisfie the Horse and 3,000 suits of Cloaths for the Foot, besides good proportions of Shoes and Stockings." These supplies were collected from the several "good Towns"—which, if not a pleasantry, may have meant the larger towns—of the county. These proceedings detained the army nearly a week. Goring's Horse from Barnstaple joined in the mean time. The whole of the King's forces then passed out of Devonshire, going to Chard, to push back Waller and Middleton, and ultimately, on the 27th of October, to meet the combined Parliamentary armies at the second battle of Newbury. This battle was indecisive, and may be said to have closed the campaign of 1644.

We are now reaching a period of the war in which hostilities on the smaller scale were carried on with increased asperity, and when the suffering and distress of the people were correspondingly aggravated. In Devonshire, this state of things was accentuated by the tyranny and unscrupulous exactions of exceptionally disreputable Royalist commanders. The Parliamentary Committees had not been slow to put in force all their powers to wring money from their own adherents, as well as from the estates of "delinquent" Royalists. The

¹ *Historical Discourses*, p. 87.

turn of the Royalist Commissioners had now come. Their weekly assessments fell upon an already impoverished people with "damnable iteration;" and, besides this, the country was harassed by the free quarter imposed upon it by the Royalist Horse. These made their excursions at will, and had the whole county, with the solitary exception of Plymouth, at their mercy. At Exeter, Sir John Berkeley, who had been commissioned by the King as "Colonel-General of Devon and Cornwall, and to command the whole forces of the two counties, as well trained-bands as others," ruled as a viceroy. Personally he is described as a man of parts, but of no very high character. He is the "Jack Berkeley" of Queen Henrietta Maria's letters, and the "My dear Jack" of Sir Edward Hyde's—inferentially a pleasant fellow. He is said to have spent at least £50,000 in the King's cause.¹

It had been provided by the articles of capitulation that no new garrison should be put into Barnstaple; but the town was not long exempt, at all events, from military occupation. Whether this was the consequence or the cause of a rebellious spirit which revived in the hearts of the Corporation is not clear. Without supposing anything more seriously demonstrative, it is not unlikely that the pressure of the demands for money provoked a passive resistance and some strong language, which led to arbitrary measures on the part of the Royalist autocrat at Exeter, and was a sufficient pretext for a hostile

¹ He was afterwards made a peer, with the title of Baron Berkeley of Stratton, by Charles II.

occupation of the town. For it is, I believe, to this incident that we are to assign two or three obscure items in the more fragmentary of the local records which, otherwise, are incapable of explanation. The Mayor and Corporation had evidently been summoned by Sir John Berkeley to account for some refractory conduct. This is alluded to, although the nature of it is not explained, in an exculpating document of the Corporation which has survived. It is a formal appointment by the Mayor and Corporation of deputies to appear at Exeter or elsewhere to answer the charge, and is here reproduced:—

To all Christian People to whom these pśentes shall come. Wee the Maior Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough and piśhe of Barnestaple in the Countie of Devon send greetinge in our Lord God everlastinge. Whereas dyvers untrue unjust and scandalous aspersiones and reportes have beene of late and dayly are caste forth rumoured and reported of and against the Corporaĉon of Barnestaple and the inhabitants thereof which reportes have spredd far and wide and have beene brought to the ears of dyvers men of place and eminency to the great defamaĉon detriment and dammage of the said Corporaĉon: Know ye therefore that wee the saide Maior Aldermen and Burgesses of Barnestaple aforesaid have deputed constituted appointed and authorysed and by these pśentes do depute constitute appoint and authoryse our trustie and well beloved friend Thomas Matthews, Robert Lane, [town-clerk], George Pooke [?] Richard Drewe, John Sweete and Thomas Grede to be our lawfull and undoubted agentes and Solicitors for us and in our names and steede and our behalfe to repaire unto the cittie of Exon or elsewhere as shall be necessary and to declare and make

knowne unto the Hon. Sir John Berkley knight Governor of the said cittie of Exon and others his Majesties Commissioners there and to all others to whom it shall apptaine our innocense and guiltlessness of these crimes so unjustly and scandalously charged upon us and by such instructions proofes and demonstraçons as we have given unto them or by what of their owne knowledge they are able to testifie to vindicate our reputaçons; and also to make knowne the manifold wronges and injuries which of late have been and dayly are done unto us and the greate usurpations and intrusions dayly offered unto us occasioned (as we conceive) by the said scandalous reports contraury to our aunient Charter of Liberties and late Articles of Immunities most graciously by the King's most excellent Majestie confirmed unto us [alluding to the articles of the capitulation ?] and of the said wronges and injuries to crave redresse and reparation and to execute and pforme all and whatsoever shalbe necessarie to be done and pformed touching the premises for and on our behalfe. We the said Maior and Aldermen and Burgesses ratifyinge allowinge and confirminge all and whatsoever the said Agentes shall lawfully doe or cause and procure to be done in and about the premises. In testimony whereof wee have caused the seale of the Incorporaçon of Barnestaple to be hereunto affixed the nynth day of December in the twentieth yeare of the raigne of our Sovereigne Lord Charles by the grace of God of England Scotland France and Ireland Kinge defender of the faithe, &c.

ADAM LUGGE, Maior

HENRY MASON

THOMAS HORWOOD.¹

The Commissioners came to Barnstaple, however, to institute the inquiry. Three of them only are named, Sir Peter Ball (Recorder of Exeter), Sir

¹ *Records*, No. xxxix.

George Parry,¹ and Mr. Peter Sainthill (of Bradninch). Of course they had to be suitably entertained, although, it may be taken for granted, with the reverse of a cheerful hospitality. It is not uncommon to find trifling waifs floating down the stream of time in such records as we are now examining, when matters which seem to us of weightier interest have sunk irretrievably to the bottom. And so we have it recorded that there was disbursed for this entertainment the sum of £3 2s. 3d., and that there was "more paid out for wine, butter, flour, spice and sugar to make a pasty, with the cook and skulling wages, £1." ² Mr. Thomas Horwood, when Mayor ten years afterwards, makes a claim upon the borough funds for these disbursements. His name, it will be observed, was appended to the document relating to the inquiry; and he appears to have been not only a prominent party in the case, but to have been made a special victim, having, at the request of the Corporation, surrendered himself as a "hostidge," and gone with others to Exeter on this business, being "out of purse" £5 in consequence. This was apparently after the Commissioners had left and, presumably, given an adverse report. But this was not the whole of his suffering. A lively idea of the state of the town at that time, when under military occupation, is obtained from

¹ "Then so called," adds the record. He had been recently knighted. He was a LL.D., and the Queen's Attorney; Member of Parliament for St. Mawes at the beginning of the Long Parliament, but "disabled" in 1644. I have not been able to ascertain what was the nature of his personal connection with Devonshire.

² *Records*, No. lxix.

another claim made by Mr. Richard Medford, a subsequent Mayor, who alleges damages to himself when he and the other emissaries went to Exeter, and a promise was made "that their houses should be kept free from quartering of officers and soldiers, and in case they should receive any loss or damage in their goods by soldiers in their absence, satisfaction should be made."¹ The claim of Mr. Horwood in these circumstances is then specified. Notwithstanding the safeguard, the house of Mr. Horwood, the very same day that he rode away, was broken into and filled with soldiers, who plundered and carried away to the full value of 20 marks' worth of his proper goods, which 20 marks then taken from him he craves—£13 6s. 8d."²

It was in the midst of such military oppression as that of which we here obtain a casual glimpse, that the Corporation appear to have cast about for some relief. No aid was to be expected from the forces of the Parliament which were far away; and, in their utter helplessness, they petition their powerful neighbour, the Earl of Bath, to use his good offices that "soldiers may not come in great numbers, and that he will speak to the commanders to regulate their conduct."³ Not much apparently being gained by this appeal, the Corporation resorted to the desperate measure of obtaining relief by a bribe, and £50 was offered and paid to Colonel John Gifford to relieve the town of the presence of Colonel Games's com-

¹ *Records*, No. lxix.

² *Ibid.*

³ Sackville MSS., *Seventh Report of Historical MSS. Commission*, App., p. 259.

pany of Horse, which lay in the town at free quarter and at great charge on the inhabitants.¹

The disturbances in Barnstaple, whatever may have been their precise meaning or importance, and of this we have no distinct notion, appear at any rate to have obtained some notoriety. In the collection of MSS., formerly called the Rupert Correspondence, there is an original letter written by Sir John Grenville to Prince Maurice, in which, for his own purposes, the writer refers to the then state of affairs at Barnstaple; and, as the letter is otherwise of considerable local interest, I give a copy of it *verbatim et literatim* :—

May it please y^r highnes

The great favour y^r highnes has donne mee, in sparing y^r surgeon, has already almost recovered mee of my wounds,

¹ *Records, Supplementary*, No. 5 (last paragraph). Colonel John Gifford, of Brightley, was himself one of the most oppressive of the Royalist colonels, if the following allegation is to be trusted. When it was known, in 1646, that he was about to compound with Parliament for his delinquency, the "well-affected" inhabitants of Chittlehampton (his own parish) petitioned the Commissioners of Parliament for the County of Devon that they might not be barred from redress against him, notwithstanding such composition, they having been, "for their good offices and coherence to Parliament," some driven from their habitations, others deprived of goods and estates, and all miserably oppressed by Colonel Gifford, "a violent and active enemy to the State, . . . to the utter ruin and overthrow of divers of them;" he had extorted and unjustly levied moneys by force from the Petitioners and many others "to the sum of £5,000 or £6,000, and kept the same;"—pray that they may have reparation of their losses and damages out of his estate. This petition is printed *in extenso* in Moore's *Devonshire*, ii. 574. A richly-bound bible and prayer-book (in one), given by Charles II. to John Gifford, Esq., "in reward for the services of his father, Colonel John Gifford, during the great Rebellion," was No. 1,120 in the Exhibition of the Royal House of Stuart, in London, 1859.

and for my health (the Phisitians tell mee) wth some repose in y^e country will be in a condition good enough, soe y^r (I hope) I shall be able to doe y^r highnes service againe, w^{ch} is my chiefest ambition. It lies now in y^r highnes power greatly to obleige mee, & enable mee for y^e future to serve y^r highnes wth a good recruite of souldiers, Barnestable who can never keepe their fingers out of a rebellion, have beene of late highly guilty in y^r kind, w^{ch} have made our wise comissioners of Devon to thincke of placing a garrison in y^r towne; In a busines of this nature I knew unto none I ought more fitly to addresse myselfe, then unto y^r highnes, and if y^r highnes thincke me worthy y^e govern^t of this towne, I doubt not but be very serviceable unto y^r highnes in this commaund. I have some interest in y^r part of y^e country in regard y^e toune lies soe neare my estate, and I know I can be noe where in a better capacity of doing y^e King service, then in this towne, because it stands in y^e midst of my tenants and acquaintance, and I'me confident (if y^r highnes vouchsafes mee this goverment and y^r contribution of y^e north part of Devon for y^e maintenance of my men) I will bring into y^e feild to march unto y^r highnes next su^mer a thousand men and leave a good garrison behind in y^e towne, all w^{ch} souldiers I will be obleiged to pay during y^e war. Thus much uppon these conditions I will engadge myselfe to doe uppon mine honour, but I wholly submitt myselfe unto y^r highnes and shall attend y^r highnes answer unto

y^r highnes most obedient servant

JOHN GRENVILL.¹

Bristoll, Decem. 23.

1644.

For his highnes Prince Maurice

These

¹ B. M. Add. MSS., No. 18,981, f. 340. Sir John Grenville, son of Sir Bevill Grenville, already mentioned as with the King's army in

The wish of the youthful Cavalier (he was then a little more than sixteen years of age only) was not however to be gratified. The time was indeed ripe, or considered to be so, for the formal imposition of a garrison upon the refractory town of Barnstaple. A garrison was established accordingly; and if he had not already done so when Sir John Grenville wrote, Sir John Berkeley appointed his own lieutenant, Sir Allen Apsley, Governor of Barnstaple.

As Sir Allen Apsley's connection with Barnstaple lasted for the remainder of the time during which the town was in Royalist occupation, some notice of his earlier history will be of interest. He was the eldest son of another Sir Allen Apsley, who was Lieutenant of the Tower of London in the reign of James I., and officially, for a time, the gaoler of our fellow West-countryman, Sir Walter Raleigh. The Lieutenant's wife has a sympathetic claim upon the regard of us Devonians, inasmuch as in kindness to the illustrious prisoner she was, we are told, "as a mother." The Apsleys were a family of good position. The children were highly educated, and Lucy, who was the wife of Colonel John Hutchinson, the Parliamentary Governor of Nottingham Castle, wrote the memoirs of her husband, one of the most charming biographies in the English language.

Cornwall. The allusion in the beginning of the letter is to his having been dangerously wounded—by a sword-cut across the head—at the recent (second) battle of Newbury. After the Restoration, he was created Viscount Lansdowne and Earl of Bath (the latter title having become extinct in the Bourchier family) by Charles II. He brought from the King to the Houses of Parliament the famous historical document called the Declaration of Breda.

The younger Allen Apsley was born in the Tower in 1616. As a boy he was noticed by the great Duke of Buckingham—not the best influence, perhaps, which could have been desired for the modelling of his character. In due time he spent several years as a student at the University of Oxford. With the avenue of the Court open to him, he was one of those who waited upon its patronage. Some envious persons, it seems, had, at one time, made reflections upon the young Apsley's loyalty, and we obtain thus casually a slight allusion to his personal disposition in a protest by his father, written with the rugged orthography of an elderly gentleman of the period: "The poore boy is soe afflicted as hee p'testes to God hee had rayther die instantly then live wth his Ma^{ties} ill opinion. Hee is not xxij^{tie}: I doe not think that ever hee medled with any thing seryous, his witt lyinge in a contrary waye."¹ Like other young military aspirants he served in the Netherlands and won his spurs. He accompanied the King to Nottingham, at the outbreak of the Civil War, and entering that town in command of a troop of Horse, by an odd chance was quartered in the house immediately adjoining that occupied by his Puritan sister, Mrs. Hutchinson.

Sir Allen Apsley's first appearance in Devonshire, so far as I have discovered, was twelve months later. At that time, which was not long after the battle of Stratton, Sir Ralph Hopton's army had marched out of the county leaving some parties of Horse to watch Exeter, which the Earl of Stamford was

¹ Printed in Forster's *Sir John Eliot*, ii. 472.

holding for the Parliament. These parties seem to have expended their superfluous energy in harrying the neighbouring country. An attack was made upon Tiverton. Some of Colonel Were's regiment of Foot lying there were surprised and dispersed, having been betrayed, as Colonel Were alleged, by the Mayor. What took place further is given by Martin Dunsford, apparently from some local record:—

In the month of August, this year [1643], Sir Allen Apsley and Major Buckingham came with a party of horse, for King Charles the First, and attempted to enter the town of Tiverton; they were resisted by the inhabitants some time, by throwing stones &c., upon which the horsemen fired upon the inhabitants; the people, seeing some of their party drop, fled; in the pursuit one John Lock, a miller, was taken prisoner, and hanged by the said troops, at the sign of the White Horse, on the north side of Gold Street; the officers and soldiers then plundered the town.*

The incident gives us a notion of—to put it mildly—Sir Allen's military vigour. A Royalist garrison having been placed in Exeter on its surrender soon afterwards, Sir Allen became Lieutenant-Governor of it under Sir John Berkeley, with whom he appears to have been on an intimately friendly footing.

We have seen that Sir Allen Apsley, in August of this year (1644), had been detached, by Sir John Berkeley with a force to relieve the besieged fort of Appledore. It is probable, although it is nowhere so stated, that when Barnstaple exhibited rebel-

* *Historical Memoirs of Tiverton*, 1790, p. 183.

lious symptoms, he was again sent into North Devon to overawe the town which he remained to govern. There was no Parliamentary force at that time threatening Exeter, and Berkeley was therefore able to spare a detachment to garrison Barnstaple. This was the situation in the beginning of 1645.

One of the first acts of Sir Allen Apsley after he was installed as Governor of Barnstaple was to resuscitate the town trained-band. Although he had probably taken care to secure its efficiency for the Royalist service, or, at all events, had considered it less harmful if under his own authority than if left even in a disembodied condition under the influence of the Corporation, the customary form of the choice of its Captain was scrupulously followed. A minute of the Corporation, which is one of the few records of this period that have been preserved, relates to this proceeding, and is here given :—

29^o die Januarii 1644 [*i.e.*, 1645].

Memorandum. That the day & yeare abovesaid M^r Maior the Aldermen & Common Counsell of the Town were comanded & required by S^r Allen Apsley to assemble themselves together & to make choice of one amongst themselves to be Captaine of the Trayned Band of the Town & for the Towne of Barnstaple whoe thereuppon beinge met together certaine men of the Co^mon Counsell of the Towne were ppounded to stand uppon the elec^con (viz.) M^r Lewis Palmer, M^r John Downe, M^r Thomas Dennys & M^r Nicholas Cook & the elec^con beinge made by Balls, after the manner of the Elec^con of the Maior of the said Towne, the lott fell uppon M^r Thomas Dennys whoe then & there was chosen to be Captaine & so stands elected & chosen Captaine.

Then follow the names of eighteen members of the Corporation as present, who were the electors.¹

The influence brought to bear on the election is sufficiently apparent. This Mr. Thomas Dennis was of Royalist proclivities. For his share in the transaction he appears to have been never forgiven by his brethren of the Parliamentary section of the Corporation. Six years afterwards, under the revived Puritan ascendancy, after having been actually chosen mayor, vengeance overtook him, and he "was prosecuted and ousted of his Mayoralty for being chosen Captain of the Trained Bands, the Town being then for the King when he was chosen Captain."²

¹ Harding MSS. The election by balls, which is recorded as "an ancient custome within the towne of Barnstaple used tyme out of mynd to elect the Mayor and all other officers," was a method of Election by ballot of a very peculiar kind which is minutely prescribed in one of the bye-laws of the town, for which see Gribble's *Memorials*, p. 351.

² "Notes from the Journal of Richard Wood, Vicar of Fremington." Chanter's *Literary History of Barnstaple*, p. 121. (Spelling modernized). By what process Mr. Dennis was "ousted" does not appear. There is no indication of the effect of it to be found in the list of Mayors given in Gribble's *Memorials*, from which it would be inferred that he served the usual term of office in 1651-2. Towards the end of his year, however, party feeling seems to have run so high that the Burgesses had recourse to the unusual step of appealing to Parliament, which would have been scarcely necessary in the case if Mr. Dennis had already been "ousted." Whitelock, under date September 30, 1652, notes that—"Mr. Dennis formerly of the King's party, being chosen Maier of Barnstaple, the Townsmen petitioned against him, and an Act was committed disabling such persons to be elected, or to be electors of any to publick Offices." The Parliament was at that time nervously afraid of any revival of the Royalist interest, and the result was that Mr. Dennis's case led to an important measure being passed, within a fortnight (on the 12th October), disabling "Delinquents" from bearing any office or having a vote in any election. (Whitelock's *Memorials*, ed. 1682, under those dates.)

In my collection there are two notices of the internal affairs of Barnstable at this time, when its civil population was under the Cavalier *régime*, which are of considerable interest. They are the more so because such notices are and must be of great rarity; garrisoned as the town was, the opportunities of communicating with the outer world, especially in a hostile temper, were precarious and hazardous. These notices come, of course not without some embellishment, through the usual medium of the London diurnal, almost the only means of publicity; but they have the unmistakable stamp of their local origin. The following account is printed under date of Saturday, Feb. 8:—

This day there came newes from the West of the state of Barnstable, which doth Certifie that the Cavaliers there are very cruell to the Inhabitants, abusing them daily, (not sparing the Maior of the towne himselfe with taunting reproaches), presse and force men and youths to serve very often, and in case that they offer to run away, as they do familiarly [?] if they have but an opportunity, they will hang up divers of them, which they have exercised on many in those parts. The town of Barnstable, the enemie is strengthening the works, and making the great fort larger where (to the great grief of the town) they intend to nest themselves.¹

The next occurs about seven weeks later, and adds something to the story of the military tyranny which prevailed:—

¹ *Perfect Occurrences of Parliament, &c.*, February 7-14, 1645, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xv.

And although there were Articles made with the inhabitants of Barnstable, when it was surrendered to the King's Forces, that it should not for the future be made a Garrison, yet have they forced the towne to make a Garrison of the castle, and thither doe they daily carrie the plunder of the towne, using the people most barbarously and cruelly, not permitting them so much as to have any conference with godly Ministers about instructions for saving their souls, &c.¹

Although the summary executions to which the former of these passages refers were doubtless exaggerations, the arbitrary and oppressive authority exercised over the civilian inhabitants by the new Governor was such as to arouse the resistance of the Corporation ; and there is to be found in their accounts the charge for messengers sent to Exeter to remonstrate with Sir John Berkeley against Sir Allen Apsley and his brother, Colonel Apsley (of whom we shall have more to say later), "for several misdemeanours," they having committed eight of the burgesses to prison.²

From these passages certain facts may, I believe, be inferred :—that Sir Allen Apsley had set to work vigorously to restore the fortifications of the town ; that the Great Fort was being converted into a sort of citadel to hold a body of troops ; that the Castle works were also being strengthened ; and that both strongholds were being provisioned, equipped, and made capable of withstanding a siege. We shall presently learn what was the opinion of a competent

¹ *The Generall Account, &c.*, March 31, 1645, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xvi.

² *Records*, No. lxix.

observer as to the completed defences of Barnstaple when he saw them two months later.

A digression is here necessary in order to describe, which will be done very briefly, the general drift of affairs at this time, and what led up to the final campaign of this war—a campaign, the issue of which, it is not too much to say, was practically decided in North Devon.

The lull in the military operations of the two great contending parties in the winter of 1644-45, was diversified by political movements of considerable moment. Of these, the incidents of the ever-present religious controversy took inevitable precedence. Twelve months previously, the famous Ordinance of the Parliament for the demolition of "monuments of Superstition and Idolatry" had been partially carried into effect. The estates of the bishops had been sequestered. The *Book of Common Prayer* had been prohibited in all churches within the limits of the influence of Parliament, and the *Directory* had taken its place. Church vestments and ceremonies had been of course discarded. Maypoles, a heathenish vanity, were to be taken down. There should be "no more cakes and ale." Christmas Day, abolished as an unholy festival, happening this year to coincide with the regular monthly fast-day, the happy omen was hailed with grim satisfaction by the Puritans—the feast was buried in the fast, never, it was hoped, to rise again;¹ although the *Parliamentary Scout* complains that

¹ Edmund Calamy's Sermon before the House of Lords.

it "troubles the children and servants; they lay much to heart the loss of pies and plum-pottage." In January, the Church received its severest shock when Archbishop Laud, who had done so much to provoke the troubles and dissensions of the time, was, by a supreme act of Puritan vindictiveness, brought out of prison and beheaded.

The political events of this interval were turning points in the course of the war. Upon the King's overture, negotiations for a treaty of peace were again agreed to; and, with due formalities, the Commissioners on either side met at Uxbridge and sat for twenty days during the month of February. The negotiations came to nothing. Even if the demands of the Parliament for the suppression of prelacy, supported by the Scotch irreconcilables, or for the control of the Militia, supported by their war party, the two chief points in dispute, could have been accommodated, there were other minor ones, not discussed, which would have been sufficient probably to wreck the treaty.

By successive stages, a remarkable measure, the "Self-denying Ordinance," was being forwarded by the Commons, and ultimately received the assent of both Houses of Parliament. Whatever may have been its ostensible motive, the Ordinance was in reality an ingenious and, as it proved, successful device for getting rid of inconvenient friends. It originated with the thorough-going section of the Commons, now in the ascendant, at the head of which was Oliver Cromwell. This party, whether or not the goal had yet dawned upon them, were on

the high road to the abolition of the monarchy and unmitigated republicanism. They wished for a vigorous prosecution of the war and its speedy conclusion in, of course, the way that suited their uncompromising views. They believed that the Parliamentary generals, especially the Earls of Essex and Manchester, were prolonging the war, after the fashion of the leisurely military operations of the Netherlands, for the sake of its emolument and distinction; that they were too wealthy to risk defeat and ruin; and too anxious for a peace of their own making and the honours which it would bring them, to push what advantages they might obtain to their due extremity. Two summers are over, cried the ardent Puritans, and we are not saved; our victories, so gallantly gotten, have been put into a bag with holes!

This idea had been rapidly developed after the last battle of Newbury, the abortive results of which were openly attributed to the lukewarmness of the Earl of Manchester, the general. The Self-denying Ordinance provided that no member of either House of Parliament should retain any office of command, civil or military, during the war. The immediate result of the measure was just what was intended—Essex, Manchester, and many others of the leading Parliamentary commanders who happened to be in Parliament, laid down their commissions. Every Peer was necessarily incapacitated.

The conspiracy was partly concocted under the influence of religious faction. The Independent sectaries, of which Cromwell and his friends were

the shining lights, had become powerful, and Presbyterianism, less on religious than on political grounds, was already discredited.

Concurrently with this energetic movement, in the beginning of the year 1645, a scheme was brought forward for remodelling the Parliamentary Army in order to the vigorous prosecution of the ensuing campaign. So much was thought and spoken of with regard to this "new modelling" that the army itself came to be popularly called the "New Model." It was to consist of 7,000 Horse and 14,000 Foot. Sir Thomas Fairfax, an already distinguished soldier in the Northern counties, who had defeated the most powerful army which the King had possessed, at Marston Moor the year before, and who had not the disqualification of being in Parliament, was appointed Commander-in-chief. With a remarkable inconsistency revealing the internal working of the conspiracy (which it undoubtedly was), Oliver Cromwell, who with the other Members of Parliament had surrendered his commission, received a dispensation from the effect of the Self-denying Ordinance, and was appointed Lieutenant-General. Practically, he was henceforth the ruling genius of the war on the Parliamentary side. Philip Skippon was to be Major-General. The new army was composed of the veterans and picked men of the various forces which had already fought for the Parliament; and Cromwell dispersed among the different regiments the highly disciplined "Ironsides," and the stern enthusiasts—"honest godly men," as he termed them—whom he had himself drilled in carnal arms. With these

materials, and so leavened, the Army was formed which brought the Civil War to the end of its first period, destroyed the King, and ultimately dismissed the Parliament itself by which the Force had been created.

Meanwhile, the troops with which the King had to meet this formidable concentration were widely distributed. Oxford was held by the Royal army commanded by Prince Rupert. Bristol was in the hands of Lord Hopton, to whom Prince Maurice had resigned the nominal command of the Western army in the previous December. Lord Goring, with the most considerable force of all, occupied Somersetshire, and was languidly besieging Taunton, then resolutely defended by Colonel (afterwards the famous Admiral) Robert Blake. In the earlier part of the winter, Goring had been faced by Sir William Waller with the remains of the old Parliamentary army in Wiltshire; and the monotony of their winter quarters had been relieved by frequent forays upon each other's country, the beating up of each other's quarters, and the exchange of prisoners and badinage. Then, as a diversion, Goring was "refreshing" at Exeter, spending three or four days there "in most scandalous disorder"—his troopers plundering up to the gates of the city.¹ The smaller garrisons in the West that were held for the King, and the strengthening of which was an object of solicitude, were Bridgwater, Dartmouth, and Barnstaple.

Of the complicated and little-understood military movements of this interval, it is only interesting in

¹ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 579 b.

this place to remark their inveterate tendency to gravitate towards the Western peninsula. Waller's object, at the opening of the campaign of 1645, was to advance into Devonshire for the purpose of relieving Plymouth, still closely besieged by Sir Richard Grenville; but he was prevented by Lord Goring. The King would have withdrawn from Oxford and joined the Western army, on the persuasion of Goring, had not the intention been frustrated by the skirmishing parties of Cromwell, which at the time barred the way.

The month of April was well advanced before the organization of the new-modelled army was completed. But in the mean time Cromwell had been alarming the garrison of Oxford by making sharp attacks on the neighbouring Royalist outposts. Goring, who had been hastily called to the support of the King at Oxford in this new emergency, having for a time skirmished with Cromwell's force, returned to his old position before Taunton to await the anticipated attack of the "New Model." Fairfax's design of relieving Taunton being modified by orders from Parliament, he merely detached a part of his army for that purpose, which failed to effect anything, and went off as ordered to watch the movements of the King, who was again taking the field. At this time Goring's army was reinforced before Taunton by Sir Richard Grenville, who, having been ordered up by the King from before Plymouth, brought 800 Horse and 2,200 Foot which, as Sheriff of Devon, he had raised by the *posse comitatus* assembled at Exeter, and there armed.

After the failure of the negotiations for peace at Uxbridge, the King, taking a despondent view of the state of his affairs, recurred to a design of sending away the Prince of Wales (afterwards Charles II.), who had hitherto accompanied him in his campaigns, to a place of safety. The design had been proposed and debated in Council twelve months before, when the Queen set out for the West, but had been laid aside; it was now carried into effect. Early in the month of March, the Prince left Oxford, and the King never saw him again.

The appointment of a Council for the Prince's guidance, composed of some of the most trusted of the King's personal advisers, implied some political purpose besides the Prince's own convenience. Lord Clarendon, who was himself one of them, tells us that the purpose was that of composing by the Prince's presence and authority, the factions and animosities in the West "which miserably infested the King's service."

The Western Royalist Army, which was at this time of the utmost strategical importance to the King's plans, was supposed to be 14,000 strong, mostly Horse, under the command of Lord Goring; but it was notoriously in a state of demoralization from its own license. The troopers were not only living everywhere at free quarter on the Somersetshire parishes, but they "equally infested the borders of Dorset, Somerset, and Devon by unheard-of rapine, without applying themselves to any enterprise upon the rebels." The "rebels" were the defenders of Taunton. Lord Hopton, the actual General-in-chief

in the West, could do nothing with Goring, who resented his authority. Sir John Berkeley and Sir Richard Grenville, besides having separate commands, each pushing his own schemes, held commissions which overlapped each other. Thus a plentiful crop of dissensions and jealousies had sprung up, with which the Prince's Council was about to find it no easy task to deal.¹

In order that the Prince might have the requisite authority for the arrangement of these differences and the restoration of order, he had received from the King a commission, making him Generalissimo of the whole of the Royalist armies. Remembering that his Highness was not yet fifteen years of age, the position is somewhat startling ; but it was of course only nominal. The same remark applies to the Prince's ostensible political precocity. Lord Clarendon, who never allows us to forget that the real oracle was the Prince's Council, invariably attributes its resolutions, with courtly obsequiousness, to the inspiration or sagacity of the Prince. As soon as the Prince had reached Bristol, his Council took upon itself the direction of the operations of the Western army.

Towards the end of April, after he had been a month at Bristol, the Prince with his Council went to Bridgwater to meet the Commissioners of the four Western Counties, and to discuss the project of an Association which had been initiated by some gentlemen of Somersetshire, for the organization of the King's forces in those parts, and the raising of

¹ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 579 a.

new levies. The Prince had already, by anticipation, received a commission as General of this Association, which is known in history as the "One and All." But as nothing, commensurate with its enthusiastic pretensions, came of this scheme, only apparently the raising of some local forces under the influence of the Prince's name, it is unnecessary to pursue its history further here.

Lord Clarendon, however, states that warrants were actually issued for the raising of these levies, and that the days for their rendezvous were appointed.¹ I am disposed to connect with these circumstances the proceeding, otherwise unexplained, which is the subject of one of the loose MSS. preserved among the records of Barnstaple, and printed by Mr. Chanter. The paper is without date and fragmentary, and apparently a portion of a letter from Sir John Berkeley to Colonel Sir Allen Apsley, the Governor of Barnstaple, relating to the raising of part of a regiment in North Devon, and giving further instructions to that effect. It is as follows :—

. . . You may use this proportion underneath written, unless you finde the numbers of men to bee more superfluous in one parte than another.

For y^e Officers of Six Companys at 10 in y^e

Company	...	...	...	...	60
From Barnstaple	...	...	...	...	54
From Biddiforde	...	...	...	...	60
From Appledor and Northam	...	...	...	...	20

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 582 b.

From Ilfarecomb	...	...	...	...	24
From Coomemartyne...	...	...	...	...	24
From Berrynaber	...	...	...	...	24
From Morthoe	...	...	...	...	18
From Georgeham	...	...	...	...	18
From Branton	...	...	...	...	36
From Westdowne	...	...	...	...	12
From Pilton	...	...	...	...	26
From Newport	...	...	...	...	12
From Taustock	...	...	...	...	24
From Fremington	...	...	...	...	26
From Eastdowne	...	...	...	...	14
From Kentesbury	...	...	...	...	15
From Trenshoe	...	...	...	...	5
From Westly	...	...	...	...	10
From Horwoode	...	...	...	...	10
From Enstow	...	...	...	...	10
From Heanton Punchardon	...	...	...	...	20

These are more than your proportion comes to, but use your owne discretion therein.²

On what principle this selection of parishes was made it is not easy to see; it was probably quite arbitrary. However, the total force thus marked for impressment would have reached, including officers (which must be taken to include what are now called non-commissioned officers), nearly five hundred men—a large contingent for only a score of North Devon parishes, already depleted by previous levies, to supply. How many were actually raised, or what became of them if raised, there is nothing to show. Sir John Berkeley's instructions probably remained a dead letter.

² *Records*, No. lxxxi.

The Devonshire Commissioners present at the Conference were Sir Peter Ball, Sir George Parry, Mr. Sainthill, and Mr. Modyford.¹ These took occasion to represent to the Prince the grievances of their county, which may be summarized as a complaint of the exactions of Sir Richard Grenville, who having received half of the whole contributions of the county, amounting to £1,100 weekly, besides other sums since he began the blockade of Plymouth, had not only not expended the same in the cause (implying that he had appropriated the money to his own private use), but, instead, had drawn arms and ammunition from their magazines, compelling the Commissioners to supply him, and had failed to raise forces as he had engaged to do. "He had received more out of Devonshire for the blocking up of Plymouth (having all Cornwall to himself likewise) than was left for the garrisons of Exeter, Dartmouth, Barnstable, and Tiverton, and for the finishing those fortifications, victualling the garrisons, providing arms and ammunition," &c. They concluded by animadverting upon the dissensions between Grenville and Berkeley, which had already (they said) led even to bloodshed.²

The Prince having been prohibited by the King from going farther westward, returned to Bristol on

¹ He was one of the sons of John Modyford, Mayor of Exeter in 1622. John Modyford had two sons, James and Thomas, who were both made baronets after the Restoration, and both were, successively, Governors of Jamaica. Sir James Modyford (probably the Commissioner) married the daughter and eventual sole heiress of Sir Nicholas Slanning, who fell at the siege of Bristol.

² *History of the Rebellion*, p. 584.

the 30th of April. Sir Edward Hyde (afterwards Earl of Clarendon, the historian), with two others of the Prince's Council, Lords Capel and Colepepper, went to Exeter for the purpose of investigating the reasonable complaints of the Devonshire Commissioners, and to reconcile, if it might be, the differences between Sir Richard Grenville (who had been wounded before Taunton, and was now invalided at Exeter) and Sir John Berkeley.

While at Exeter, the Council were also employed in ordering forward supplies for the King's forces. Writing from thence on the 21st of May to Prince Rupert, Sir Edward Hyde says:—

Since I wrote, that is on Sunday morning last, [there] has arrived at Dartmouth a ship with two hundred barrels of powder, and at Falmouth there are great, very great quantities of match and muskets and pistols arrived. I have given directions for drawing a good proportion of all to Bristol, by Barnstaple, and have likewise written to Charles Gerrard to appoint some persons to receive his powder at [*a blank in copy*—? Bristol] from whence he may have it at Swansea in one tide. I expect an answer from him to-morrow night at Barnstaple, whither I go to give direction for the constant transportation of all that ammunition which I have directed to be sent thither, for I would not venture too much at a time.

In a subsequent letter, he mentions two thousand muskets, brought over by one Hadscome, and a hundred barrels of powder, which had been sent from Barnstaple to Bristol. This supply was probably the same which he was now going to Barnstaple to get shipped. He adds:—

I hope to be at Bristol, or where the Prince is (I would he were in these parts, for I hear the plague hath driven him from Bristol,) within four days.¹

Carrying out the intention expressed in the foregoing of these extracts, Sir Edward Hyde must have ridden to Barnstaple from Exeter immediately after dispatching that letter. On the 27th of May, six days later, he is writing to Prince Rupert from Bath, where he had arrived the previous night to rejoin the Prince of Wales, who had, in fact, removed thither on account of the sickness (supposed to have been the plague) which had broken out in Bristol. Hyde had gone from Barnstaple to Bristol by sea, a passage which seems to have been a well-frequented one in those days; and it had its advantages at a time when the inland route by Taunton and Bridgwater was possibly blocked by hostile military parties. The time of the year was propitious, but such as the coasting craft of that day were, or, for that matter, are now, the voyage cannot be deemed to have been otherwise than a rough experience.²

Whilst at Barnstaple, Sir Edward Hyde was of course entertained by the Governor of the garrison, Sir Allen Apsley. Familiar as he was with other towns, Oxford, Reading, Bristol, and Exeter, the defences of which had been extemporized during the

¹ Printed in Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii. 95.

² The sailing-smack continued, however, to be an ordinary means of passenger traffic between the North Devon ports and Bristol until it was superseded by the "steam-packet" in the fourth decade of the present century.

war, and were as efficient as anything of the kind then to be seen in England, he was favourably impressed by the completeness of the fortifications of the North Devon town. He had already, it seems, given his correspondent, Prince Rupert, an account, partly from report only, of the Devonshire garrisons; now, he was able from actual observation to describe what he had seen of Barnstaple as a fortress, and of its condition to maintain itself:—

I came the last night to this place, having been compelled to take shipping at Barnstaple for Bristol . . . if you have not received a very particular account of all the Devonshire garrisons, one very long letter of mine hath missed you: but in truth, though I expected very much from Barnstaple, it exceeded far even that expectation, and considering all circumstances is the most miraculously fortified place that I know, and I am confident is the best provided to receive an enemy, especially in a magazine of victuals, of any town in England.

*Bath, this 27th May, almost two in the morning.*¹

On the 9th of May, Lord Goring left the King's army, which two days before had marched out of Oxford, and with three thousand Horse returned, as already stated, to his old quarters about Taunton. Shortly after, an important order from the King reached the Prince of Wales's Council requiring Goring forthwith to rejoin him with all the forces that could be spared, and that the Prince should stay at Dunster Castle. To this the Council re-

¹ Printed in Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, ii. 92.

plied at length, on the 24th of the same month, that if the forces then before Taunton were withdrawn, the whole county of Somerset would be in the possession of the rebels within a few days, that the garrisons in the West would be endangered, and that Prince Charles could not be safely left in those parts.¹ The order was not obeyed; and Goring wrote to the King urging him to act only upon the defensive until Taunton should be taken. The letter was intercepted by Fairfax, and it was this, it is stated, that induced the Parliamentary generals to follow and attack the King before he could be joined by the army from the West. Blake's obstinate defence of Taunton thus deprived the King at a critical time of Goring's help.

The Prince of Wales's withdrawal at this time from Bristol has been alluded to. Dunster Castle, being a strong fortress now garrisoned for the King, had been pointed out by his Majesty's wishes as a suitable refuge; although at Court, as Lord Clarendon intimates, it was presumably not known that the plague which had driven the Prince from Bristol "was as hot at Dunster town, just under the walls of the castle."² In these circumstances, the historian, with an effusiveness which indicates that, *inter alia*, the attractions of Barnstaple still lingered in his imagination, wrote—"No place was thought so convenient for his residence as Barnstaple, a pleasant town in the north part of Devonshire, well

¹ Letter, Bodleian Library. Printed in Lister's *Life of Clarendon*, iii. 10.

² *History of the Rebellion*, p. 591 b.

fortified, with a good garrison in it, under the command of Sir Allen Apsley." ¹

It was "about July this year," says Lady Fanshawe, in her delightful *Memoirs*, "the plague increased so fast in Bristol, that the Prince and all his retinue went to Barnstaple, which is one of the finest towns in England." ² Written long afterwards, the month is incorrectly stated. It was on the 1st of June that the Prince left Bath, whither, as we have seen, he had removed from Bristol. On the 2nd, he was at Wells; and on that day a meeting of five or six thousand "Clubmen," mostly armed, and all angry, took place in a field near Castle Cary—men who had risen in a neutral attitude and without any predilection for this cause or that, to resist, as Lord Clarendon admits, the "intolerable oppression, rapine and violence exercised by the Lord Goring's Horse." Deputies from the petitioners being received by the Prince, laid their complaints before him with, of course, assurance of their loyalty. To this a politic reply was given, regretting the inevitable necessities of war and generally recommending the petitioners to pay up their contributions and enlist regularly in the Prince's service. The pacification was only, as might be expected, temporary.

On the following day, the 3rd of June, the Prince was at Bridgwater—or was to have been. It is probable that his stay there was a brief one, as the Council had on the occasion of the Prince's pre-

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 591 a.

² *Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe, wife of Sir Richard Fanshawe, Bart., &c, Written by Herself*, 1830, p. 70.

vious visit in April to contend with the "folly and petulancy" of Mrs. Wyndham, wife of Colonel Edmond Wyndham, the Governor of the garrison. It appears that she had been the Prince's wet-nurse; the boy was naturally attached to her, and, it was broadly suggested that Mrs. Wyndham, in the family interests, indiscreetly endeavoured to make use of her personal influence; and, by speaking "negligently and scornfully of the Council," diverted the young prince's mind from the serious business upon which he was engaged.¹ The journey was therefore no doubt soon resumed, the Prince leaving Bridgewater for Dunster Castle.

It is not precisely known how long the Prince remained at the castle, but as the plague was then rife in the little town which stood below the keep it is not likely that his stay was for more than a day or two. The only traces of the visit that remain are the traditional "Prince's room," which is still pointed out in the castle, and an entry in the accounts of Minehead, the adjoining parish, of sundry payments amounting to 14s.—"Given the ringers in beer at severall times when the prince and other great men came to the town"—and a payment of 5s. 6d. "to the prince's footman which he claymed as due to him to his fee."² Instances of this system of compulsory vails have been already noticed. Dunster Castle was at that time owned by Colonel George Luttrell, in succession to his father, Mr. Thomas Luttrell, who had defended it for

¹ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 582 b.

² Savage's *History of Carhampton*, p. 591.

the Parliament at the commencement of the war and had died in 1643. Since the surrender of the castle to the Royalists, it had been occupied by a garrison under the command of Colonel Francis Wyndham.

It must have been close upon the middle of June when the Prince and his retinue continued their journey to Barnstaple. It has been conjectured that the cavalcade passed over Exmoor; and this is not improbable. The trackway through the red-deer country, the wild moorland which has been so well described in the pages of Blackmore, was then part of the usual highway between Bristol and Barnstaple. In the summer time it was probably even more practicable, as it certainly must have been more pleasant, than the rough narrow lanes which skirted the moor.

The Prince was escorted by three troops of Horse from Lord Hopton's garrison. The notabilities who accompanied him were the Earl of Berkshire, his governor—of whom Lord Clarendon makes the sweeping remark that he was "of any who bore the name of gentleman, the most unfit for that province, or any other that required any proportion of wisdom and understanding for the discharge of it;"¹ Brian Duppa, Bishop of Salisbury, the Prince's tutor, a discreet and learned prelate—"a very handsome personage of a graceful deportment and of an irreproachable life;"² Lord Hopton, whom we have already had frequent opportunities of knowing; Lord Colepepper,³ nominally Master of the Rolls, a

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 486 a.

² Granger's *Biographical History*, v. 5.

³ Also written Culpeper.

rough, hot-headed, uncourtly man, whose trenchant and confident opinions were nevertheless held in great favour by the King; Lord Capel, one of the noblest and loveliest characters of the time, who was subsequently executed after the surrender of Colchester for his share in the insurrection against the Parliament; and Sir Edward Hyde, nominally Chancellor of the Exchequer. These were the members of the Prince's Council present with his Highness. Here was also, in the character of military adviser of the Council, the Earl of Brentford—"an experienced commander," says Sir Philip Warwick, "and a man of a naturall courage, and purely a soldier." As Sir Patrick Ruthven he had served with great distinction under Gustavus Adolphus and, as Lord Ruthven, he had commanded the King's Horse at the battle of Edgehill. In a subordinate capacity was Mr. Richard Fanshawe, Secretary to the Council, afterwards a baronet, a man of some literary note and a poet; in post-Restoration days English ambassador to Spain.

The ladies who belonged to this distinguished party appear, from Lady Fanshawe's account, to have followed two days after the Prince—"for," says she, "during all the time I was in the Court I never journeyed but either before him or when he was gone, nor ever saw him but at church, for it was not in those days the fashion for honest women, except they had business, to visit a man's Court."¹ What is here alluded to was probably a piece of etiquette derived from the French Court, and intro-

¹ *Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe*, p. 70.

duced by Queen Henrietta Maria. The demureness of the passage is amusing. When Mrs. Fanshawe set out upon her travels she was barely twenty years of age, and had been married to Mr. Fanshawe the year before, when she was one of the crowd of Royalist fugitives who then filled Oxford. Her *Memoirs* were written long afterwards, after many vicissitudes and when many things had been forgotten. It would be curious to ask if this was the "fine Mrs. Fanshawe," by her own account not long since a "hoyting girl," fond of the "virginals and dancing," about whom a pestilent undergraduate of Trinity College was taking notes—how that she and her bosom friend, the beautiful Lady Isabella Thynne, (to whom, playing on the lute, the poet Waller addressed a rhapsody) were wont to come to the College chapel, mornings, "halfe dressed like Angells;" and how old Dr. Kettle, the president, somewhat coarsely, even for those days, rebuked them for their levity.¹

Besides Mrs. Fanshawe, there were in the party Lady Brentford, who had been taken prisoner in her carriage by the Parliamentary troops after the second battle of Newbury; Lady Capel, wife of Lord Capel, a lady of "great virtue and beauty," the heiress of Cashiobury, and one of the most estimable women of her time; and her daughter, afterwards Marchioness of Worcester.

The central personage was of course the Prince of Wales, or Prince Charles as he was more commonly

¹ *Aubrey's Lives*, 1813, ii. 428. Mrs. Fanshawe is the "Lady Fentham" of Mr. Shorthouse's *John Inglesant*; see chap. ix. of that work.

called, then a little more than fifteen years of age; a rather ill-favoured, dark-complexioned youth—when an infant his own mother had on that account been ashamed of him. Madame de Motteville has given us his personal description, drawn from the life a few months later, which, if appreciative, is apparently not wanting in candour: "This prince was very well shaped, his brown complexion agreed well enough with his large bright black eyes, though his mouth was exceedingly ugly, but his figure was surpassingly fine. He was very tall for his age, and carried himself with grace and dignity. His natural tendency to wit and repartee was not noticed, for at that time of his life he hesitated, and even stammered, a defect observed in his father, Charles I., and still more seriously in his uncle, Louis XIII."¹ His tutor, the courtly Brian Duppa, called him the "darling and little eye of this kingdom," and eulogized his "gentle and sweet disposition." Lord Clarendon, generally profuse and notoriously admirable in his character-sketches, on the other hand, refers to the Prince with the brevity and reserve which the case and his sense of loyalty seem to have imposed.

Lady Fanshawe does not say much of the life at Barnstaple during her stay there. She was of the quality and had the manner of the fine lady, and her discretion, as we infer, kept her from knowing, or at least telling us, anything of the affairs of the Prince's Court. One of the pleasantest recollections of her visit seems to have been associated with the mazzard

¹ Quoted in Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, 1845, viii. 133.

pie, then in season, which, "with their sort of cream," was the best she had ever eaten. It is a combination which still commends itself to the gastronomic critic. The town does not appear to have been at that time in any straits; there were "all sorts of good provision and accommodation."¹

A tradition, which not improbably may be well founded, points to a house near the southern end of High Street, at the rear of that now occupied by Mr. Kiell, and which is said to have formerly had a garden in front of it abutting upon the street, as the one in which the Prince lodged. The impecuniosity of the Prince was such that, while at Bristol, he had been dependent upon Lord Hopton's table for his daily bread. During his stay at Barnstaple it has become known that he became indebted to a respectable widow, Grace Beaple,² at whose house he lodged and who "dressed all his meat," not only for domestic service, but also for the loan of money; on which account, it is alleged, she was afterwards plundered by the Parliamentarians to the value of two thousand pounds. After the Restoration, the widow's claims were embodied in a petition to the then King Charles II., from Elizabeth Estmond, her representative (Grace Beaple having in the mean time died), and a warrant was issued for the payment to her of £200, "in discharge of money lent and service rendered to the King when at Barnstaple, in the County of Devon."³

¹ *Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe*, pp. 70, 71.

² She had been the third wife of Richard Beaple, merchant, previously mentioned.

³ *Calendar State Papers: Domestic*—1661-62, p. 41.

Sir Edward Hyde appears to have been quartered with Sir Allen Apsley, the Governor of the garrison. The others of the Council were distributed among the principal householders. The Fanshaws lodged at Mr. Palmer's, a merchant — doubtless our old friend who had surrendered the town in 1643.

From an unsavoury episode which Lord Clarendon gives in his meagre account of the doings of the Prince and his Court at Barnstaple, it may be inferred that his Highness fell into questionable company there. The Ethiopian does not change his skin; and the carefully veiled allusion is in keeping with what the accomplished and high-minded Marquess of Ormonde observed a few years later, and referred to as the Prince's "immoderate delight in empty and effeminate and vulgar conversations."¹ Gribble² has given currency to another story, in this case only traditional, and of the order "scandalous," which, considering the Prince's age, is on the face of it rather improbable. It is an old suggestion that the story was trumped up by some vain creature who thought by this means to gild with illusion the too obtrusive result of her frailty. It is not unlikely, however, that it arose spontaneously at a later period of relaxed morality, when the profligacy of Charles II. became a familiar topic. The claim, if genuine, was too good not to have been made the most of, and it was of the only sort which the King responded to generously.

¹ Lister's *Life of Clarendon*, i. 433.

² *Memorials*, p. 454.

The battle of Naseby was fought on the 14th of June.

As already stated, the King with his army took the field on the 7th of May, unable to remain any longer in Oxford exposed to the imminent danger of being besieged there. He was joined by Prince Rupert and Prince Maurice with their forces. So far as there was any object connected with this expedition, it may be described as pretty much a march into space. The immediate result, however, was the taking of several petty fortified posts, the relief of Chester then besieged, and the storming and capture of Leicester. In the mean time the Parliament resolved that an attempt should be made upon Oxford. Fairfax, who, it will be remembered, had gone off to the relief of Taunton, was hastily recalled for the purpose. The fall of Leicester, however, which happened on the last day of May, determined Fairfax and Cromwell, the associated commanders of the Parliamentary army, to raise the siege and "attend upon" the King's movements.

The King's army, increased to about ten thousand men, was at the same time in motion, marching southward for the purpose of relieving Oxford. It had advanced as far as Daventry, in Northamptonshire, and a convoy of provisions had been successfully thrown into the city, when, upon an alarm from the outpost of the appearance of the enemy in force, it fell back upon Market Harborough. On the following morning the two armies met near the village of Naseby, about five miles from that town. The result of the famous battle, the details of which

belong to general history, and in this relation require no place, was the utter defeat of the Royalists. It was the last battle in which the King was personally engaged. Prince Rupert with some of the forces threw himself into Bristol, and the King, with not much more than a body-guard, found a temporary refuge in Ragland Castle, where, in the midst of the princely hospitalities of the Marquess of Worcester, he strove to forget the distractions of the times and the desperate condition of his cause.

"When the Prince came to Barnstable," says Lord Clarendon, "he received the fatal news of the battle of Naseby, by the noise and triumphs which the rebels made in those parts for their victory, without any particular information, or account from Oxford, or any credible persons; which left some hope that it might not be true, at least not to that degree that disaffected people reported it to be."¹ Through that mysterious channel of communication by which rumour travels, the event had become first known to all except the members of the Prince's Court. We are able by this to fix approximately the time of the Prince's arrival as about the 15th of June; although there is nothing incompatible in Lord Clarendon's statement with his having been there a day or two earlier. We also learn that there was still a considerable Parliamentary party in the town bold enough to give vent to their sentiments.

There was now the more reason why the Council, to whom the military affairs of the Royalists in the

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 593 b.

West had been entrusted, should bestir themselves to retrieve, if possible, by the reconstruction of the Western Army the disaster of Naseby. But the jealousies and animosities—the “intolerable pride and incorrigible faction”—among the King’s officers in the West were still, as they continued to be until the end, the insuperable difficulty.

Between the 25th of June, when we find him at Hereford with the King,¹ and the 1st of July, when he dated a letter from Tiverton,² Prince Rupert contrived to visit his cousin the Prince of Wales at Barnstaple, “to give him,” Lord Clarendon says, “an account of the ill posture he had left the King in.” He is said to have crossed the Bristol Channel and to have landed at Minehead. From Barnstaple he proceeded to Lord Goring’s quarters before Taunton.

I find no authority for Gribble’s statement (*Memorials, &c.*, p. 454) that Prince Maurice was also at Barnstaple during Prince Charles’s stay there. Maurice was all the time at Worcester.

One of the tasks which the Prince’s Council found waiting for them at Barnstaple was that of dealing with the factious and troublesome pretensions of the irrepressible Sir Richard Grenville, who there waited

¹ Letter printed in Eliot Warburton’s *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii. 121.

² Letter printed in *ibid.*, iii. 124. By an error either of the original or of the transcriber this is dated “June 31st.” The date which I have substituted is the probably correct one. The address has been erased. It seems to have been sent back to Barnstaple by the Prince’s *attaché*, Arthur Trevor, addressed to one of the Prince of Wales’s Council, pressing for some service to himself. The letter was lent to Warburton by Lord John Fitzroy.

upon the Prince. From *Sir Richard Grenville's Narrative of the proceedings of his Majesty's affairs in the West of England since the defeat of the Earl of Essex at Lestwithiel in Cornwall, A.D. 1645* [sic],¹ which although written in the third person was evidently penned by Grenville himself or at his dictation, it appears that he complained that a commission as chief commander of the "associated army," promised to him by the Council when at Exeter, had not been sent to him. This omission, his comment complacently runs, "was none of the weakest reasons why that associated army was not raised." He also complained that Sir John Berkeley, under his commission as "Colonel-General" of Devonshire and Cornwall, had commanded the Commissioners of these counties not to obey any of Sir Richard Grenville's orders. Here was an instance of the conflict of authority, previously referred to, which was already breaking up the strength of the King's party in the West. Whatever these high-mettled Cavaliers might have done if left to themselves to settle these punctilios as to precedence, it is tolerably certain that the Council, although acting in the Prince's name, could do but little to smooth matters. One only of the military competitors was pure and disinterested. While others were standing each upon his own dignity, Lord Hopton was declaring that, for his part, he was ready to sacrifice his own honour in the service of the Prince.

At about the same time in which Sir Richard Grenville was bringing his complaints to the Prince's

¹ Printed in Carte's *Letters*, i. 96.

Court at Barnstaple, but whether immediately before or after is uncertain, he was using his position and authority as Sheriff of Devon to raise the county forces with the object of putting himself at their head. The design is candidly avowed in the *Narrative*, but it was frustrated, it seems, by the Commissioners. The following is his own account although written in the third person :—

Sir R. G. was desired by many of the gentry of Devon (as Sheriff) to command a general meeting of all the inhabitants of Devon at Crediton, *i.e.* 4 or 5 of the Chief of every parish, to advise of speedy means to raise a powerful army in the county for the defence and security of the same against the enemy. . . . Some of the Commissioners met at Crediton accordingly, and found there present above 5,000 of the chief inhabitants of that county ; whose propositions were, that if they might have Sir R. Grenville for their Commander, and that none of their arms should be taken again from them, nor they carried out of their county without their own consents, that they would generally provide themselves of arms and munition upon their own charges towards the defence of the county against the enemy ; and that such as would not join with them in the same courses, should be taken and dealt with as enemies. But the Commissioners denying them leave to choose their own Commander, and by words giving the country great distaste, made them depart very much discontented, and the hopeful meeting to raise a great army became desperately lost : which hastened the ruin of the West.

The proceeding, which seems to have been of the nature stated in the *Narrative*, was considered a highly reprehensible contempt of the Prince's

authority, and gave great umbrage to the Council. It is scarcely necessary to remark that the description of the assemblage at Crediton was a mere gasconade; even four or five persons from every parish in Devonshire would not have produced half the number, and if the agricultural parishes only were meant, as is more probable, the absurdity of the estimate becomes more glaring; if there was no intentional exaggeration, the subtraction of one or even two final numerals from the "5,000" of the text may be the more correct reading.¹

The violence and truculence of Sir Richard Grenville's conduct had not however yet reached their limit. After leaving the Prince, he, in no better humour and without any commission, established himself with his own Horse and Foot at Ottery St. Mary and indulged in the most arbitrary excesses. It was here that his quarrel with Sir John Berkeley took its acutest form. He adopted a highly original method of offence by ordering a "warrant" to be read in the churches of the district over which he had assumed control—"that all persons should bring him an account of what moneys or goods had been plundered from them by Sir John Berkeley or any under him."² Such were the relations existing at that time between the Royalist commanders in the West, whilst the enemy was preparing for a vigorous march upon them. The tradition which is said to exist that children were hushed by their mothers with the

¹ There is an error twice made in the *Narrative*, as printed, of the year from which these transactions date.

² Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 598 b.

threat of "Grenville's coming!" is probably fabulous; but it is one of those accretions which show how real was the wide-spread terror in common life for which the excesses and cruelties of this unprincipled Cavalier were responsible.

Sir Richard Grenville's extraordinary proceedings are detailed with considerable acrimony by Lord Clarendon, who was his persistent, if virtuous, enemy. Notwithstanding the affronts which the Council received from Grenville, and which they sharply retaliated upon him, eventually putting him under arrest, he seems to have retained a place in Prince Charles's esteem.¹ This, however, is perhaps not much in his favour.

The period of the Prince of Wales's stay at Barnstaple was coincident with one of culminating interest in the progress of the war. The history of this short period is exceptionally enriched by a copious epistolary correspondence in which many allusions to Barnstaple occur, showing that much of the plans and policy of the King's friends was influenced from thence. Sir Edward Hyde, one of the most active letter-writers of his time, besides dealing with the higher matters of State, which absorbed a great deal of his attention whilst at Barnstaple, had to condescend continuously to details of the supply of arms and ammunition. He was in frequent correspondence with Sir Edward Nicholas, the honest and devoted Secretary of State, who was in constant communication with the King.

¹ Evelyn's *Diary and Correspondence*, iv. 198.

A draft, or copy, partly in cipher, of one of Sir Edward Hyde's letters, preserved in the Bodleian Library, is of some interest to us for its allusions; and I shall make extracts from it, omitting passages which have no direct concern with the present relation. During the hottest periods of the Civil War the chances of letters by the horse-posts reaching their destination were precarious; two out of four of Nicholas's recent letters to Hyde had miscarried, and several of Hyde's had not come to Nicholas's hands. The letter from which the following extracts are taken was sent by a special messenger. Sir Edward Nicholas was then at Oxford. After deploring the disaster of Naseby, the writer expresses his confidence that the King may yet be preserved by "means which have been least looked after," and inferentially by the Western forces, which, it might be, were not so contemptible as they had been reported. He then alludes to Goring's influence at the Court to the prejudice of the Prince's Council:—

[*Sir Edward Hyde to Sir Edward Nicholas.*]

. . . if you knew the arte and industry that hath been used at Court to dishonour the Prince, oppress us, and to frustrate all our endeavours, you would be sad at heart. Trust me, if that had not been the Prince would by this time have had the best army that hath been in England since this rebellion. L^d Goring hath taken his pleasure of us. I pray God hee doth not so too of the King. I had noe mind to give him your cypher with me. You know the

old way of opening letters, and I have noe minde he should know my secrets.

In continuation, Sir Edward Hyde goes on to matters of more local interest :—

The King hath sent for my L^d Culpepper and my selfe to attend him at Hereford, but y^e Prince is not willing to spare us both, and soe I think it will come to his turne to goe, and mine to stay here, though truely I had a very good minde to y^t journey. I believe my L^d Culpepper will goe towards Hereford on Munday next, but sure he will not stay long there. Wee could wish that the King would leave P. Rupert to recruite that army, and himselfe come hither (at least for some time) to prevent any mischief by L^d Goring ; and truely I thinke you will, maugre all these misfortunes, have a good account of these parts. My L^d Goring is still before Taunton, and sure hath reduced those people to great streights, and if they are not speedily releived, they will bee his owne. His forces are above 5000 horse, and sure hee can fight 5000 footē. S^r. Rich. Grenville is with him, and Sir John Berkeley undertakes y^e worke before Plymouth. The Prince hath settled the trayned bands of Cornwall, and put good trusty gentlemen, and good lieuteñt colonells and majors in y^e head of the severall regiments. There will be a body of 6000 foote armed wthin these ten dayes : the Prince intends himselfe to goe thither to take a view of them. If L^d Goring had been as much soldier as wee expected, that work had been done long before this time ; but hee nothing but drinks and playes.

I will keep your messenger here one day, and then I will send another letter to you by him ; and if you doe not heare often from mee, it shall not bee my fault, for indeed I will write every day.

This letter is dated, "Barnstaple, this 25 June," and the following postscript, which is full of interest to us, is added to it:—

The Prince is much delighted wth this place, and indeed it is a very fine sweete towne as ever I saw.¹

It was not a mere passing thought that prompted Sir Edward Hyde's wish that the King would rejoin his son Prince Charles at Barnstaple. It occurs again in the form of a regret, expressed in his *History of the Rebellion*, that the King had not repaired immediately after the battle of Naseby into the West, where he had an army already formed, and a people generally well devoted to his service, and whither all his broken troops might have been collected before the advance of the Parliamentary army. We see, in the letter next quoted, that the suggestion that the King should shelter himself at Barnstaple with his son had been actually discussed at his own quarters at Ragland Castle. It seems at one time to have been so decided, for in a letter written by his Majesty to Prince Rupert on the 5th of July,² he says:—"I likewise desire your opinion how soon I shall pass the water." This could scarcely have meant anything else but passing from Wales into Devonshire. But it was now too late, and the opportunity had been lost. The Parliamentary army was rapidly advancing towards

¹ Copy in the Bodleian Library. Printed in Lister's *Life and Administration of Edward First Earl of Clarendon*, &c., 1837, iii. 19.

² Printed in Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii. 131, where the letter is misdated "July 1."

Somersetshire. Barnstaple, however, the importance of which in the estimation of the King's military advisers at this juncture is sufficiently apparent, was to be provisioned and maintained. These resolutions are explained in the following extracts from a letter written by Lord Digby, the King's private Secretary, to Prince Rupert, from Ragland Castle, July 13 :—

. . . It is the unanimous, and as his Majesty conceives, indisputable opinion, that, as the case stands in the West, there is nothing else to be done but what General Goring proposes : that is, to draw all the forces that persuasion and the Prince of Wales's authority can prevail with, out of Devonshire, Cornwall, and from before Plymouth, and to join with Goring, wherewith he may be able to give them [Fairfax's army] battle, or at least to defend the passes into the heart of Devonshire, so as that the rebel army may be wearied out and distressed for provisions, whilst we make the greatest magazines we can in Exeter and Barnstaple ; the latter of which places we shall take care to supply in the best measure we can from this side of the water ; and to this effect pressing letters are sending unto the Prince of Wales's Council. . . . To the third point, which concerns the King's own person, it is conceived that General Goring being now so far retreated into Devonshire, and the enemy following, it is not possible for any more forces from hence, or for any of those on the other side not yet joined, to pass to him : and that for the King's person it cannot be conveyed thither without infinite danger ; and that were that practicable, it would be very imprudent to engage both his and his son's person in the same corner upon such uncertainties before so powerful an enemy, whereas probably, his person cannot contribute much more to the strengthening of General

Goring out of Devonshire and Cornwall than the Prince of Wales's will do without him.¹

From the argumentative style of the latter part of Lord Digby's letter it may be inferred, I think, that Prince Rupert, after his visit to Barnstaple, had been in favour of the original proposal that the King should seek refuge there. But before this letter was written, the Council of the Prince of Wales, alarmed by the approach of the enemy then supposed to be aiming at Exeter and threatening to cut off the Prince, had already decided that North Devon was no longer a safe place for his Highness. "The Prince," writes Sir Edward Hyde, on the 8th of July, "intends on Friday [the 11th] to go for Cornwall," and on that day he probably set out for Launceston²—it was certainly before the 13th. The defeat which Lord Goring, in fact, sustained on the 10th of July confirmed the desire of the Council to remove to safer quarters.

It was at Barnstaple that the Prince of Wales must have received the pathetic and deeply interesting letter written to him by his father from Hereford on the 23rd of June. Revealing the King's utter dejectedness after the fatal battle of Naseby and a certain heroic obstinacy of despair, this historical letter shows the unhappy Charles clinging to the lofty ideas of the kingly prerogative which in all his difficulties

¹ Printed in Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii. 141.

² On the 10th he was at Appledore. In the parish register of Northam the following contemporary note has been made :—"Prince Charles was at Appledore in Northam the tenth day of July, anno Domini 1645." (For this I am indebted to the Rev. M. D. Dimond-Churchward.) It is possible, although not probable, that the Prince took shipping there for Cornwall.

he persistently thought it his sacred duty to hand on unimpaired to his descendants. The letter, which was of a kind to sadden the last days of the young Prince's stay in Barnstaple, is worth reproducing :—

CHARLES,

My late misfortunes remember me to command you that which I hope you shall never have occasion to obey ; it is this : if I should at any time be taken prisoner by the rebels, I command you (upon my blessing) never to yield to any conditions that are dishonourable, unsafe for your person, or derogatory to regal authority, upon any considerations whatsoever, though it were for the saving of my life ; which in such a case, I am most confident, is in greatest security by your constant resolution, and not a whit the more in danger for their threatening, unless thereby you should yield to their desires. But let their resolutions be never so barbarous, the saving of my life by complying with them would make me end my days in torture and disquiet of mind, not giving you my blessing, and cursing all the rest who are consenting to it. But your constancy will make me die cheerfully, praising God for giving me so gallant a son, and heaping my blessing on you ; which you may be confident (in such a case) will light on you. I charge you to keep this letter still safe by you, until you shall have cause to use it ; and then, and not till then, to shew it to all your Council ; it being my command to them, as well as to you ; whom I pray God to make as prosperously glorious as any of the predecessors ever were of

Your loving father,

CHARLES R.*

We have seen army after army of one or the other of the contending factions entering Devonshire, eat-

* Printed in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 633.

ing up its resources, and harassing the people by exactions and military pressure in every form. Once more the shadow is approaching—this time of the best-disciplined and most formidable and resolute army that had yet taken the field. It will be desirable before we come to the story of its contact with Barnstaple to describe briefly its onward march. North Devon, it will be remembered, was at that time practically under the foot of Lord Goring, whose forces scattered on the border between Devon and Somerset, were nominally besieging Taunton, which was held by Colonel Robert Blake for the Parliament. Of Sir Richard Grenville's movements in the independent capacity which he affected, enough has been said. He was not where he would have been of use to the Royalist cause, and generally was making trouble elsewhere where he was not wanted.

For this part of our story there is fortunately no occasion to disturb the dust of old documents—at least, so far as the details of the Parliamentary army's operations are concerned. They have been preserved for us in the contemporary record of Joshua Sprigge, M.A.—the work known as *Anglia Rediviva; England's Recovery: Being the History of the Motions, Actions, and Successes of the Army under the immediate conduct of his Excellency Sir Thomas Fairfax, Kt., Captain-General of all the Parliament's Forces in England*. This was first printed in the year 1647, immediately after the events described. Sprigge was a chaplain in Fairfax's army, and accompanied it throughout the campaign; for a Puritan, his manner is not immoderately enthusiastic, and his

historical work is generally held to be authentic. The contemporaneous movements of the Royalist army which confronted that of Fairfax when he reached Devonshire are to be learnt from other sources; but Lord Clarendon, who had no love for the two prominent Royalist generals who were responsible chiefly for the final disasters which attended the King's forces in the West, has left a curtailed and probably somewhat biassed account of their proceedings.

After the rout of Naseby, the army of the Parliament pursued its advantage and recovered the town of Leicester, which was only a few miles from the field of battle. The prisoners, the colours, and the spoil, including the cabinet of the King's letters, which proved so damaging to his cause, were sent under guard to London. The threatened conjunction between Goring's army and the King's had been averted. Fairfax, who had been apprised by intercepted letters of the disposition and strength of Goring's army lying about Taunton, then resolved to turn southward to attack it, after joining General Massey,¹ who, with a brigade of 3,000 Horse, had been left on the borders of Dorsetshire to watch the movements of Goring's largely superior forces.

By steady marches Fairfax's army reached Salisbury Plain on the 1st of July, and was drawn up in battalia at the rendezvous, which Sprigge, apparently unimpressed by the grandest prehistoric

¹ He who had defended the city of Gloucester successfully against King Charles in person until relieved by the Earl of Essex's army.

monument on English soil, mentions incidentally as "a place called Stonage."

Fairfax's movements were here somewhat embarrassed by the appearance in the field of a threatening body of "Clubmen." Something has already been said of them, and of their assertion of themselves when Prince Charles first entered Somersetshire. The instigators of the movement were the small squires and yeomen, whose ideas did not extend very far beyond their own acres. They were of the same type as the angry farmer who warns off the surveyors in that famous sketch by Leech in the time of the railway mania of 1845. Finding themselves harassed, their stock seized, and their crops damaged, alike by both the contending parties, their neutral frame of mind was like Mercutio's, when he uttered his famous impartial malediction. They had the larger influence with their dependents which prevailed in those days, and therefore were able to collect a considerable, but of course undisciplined and rudely armed, body of rustics. These wore white "inkle-strings" (tape) in their hats to distinguish themselves, and some gifted bucolic rhymster, in a moment of inspiration, had composed for their banners this couplet—

"If you offer to plunder or take our cattle,
Be assured we will bid you battle."

These disturbances seem to have been confined at first to the counties of Wilts, Dorset, and Somerset. It was thought that there was danger of their spreading over the country and adding to the

difficulties of the Parliament. Fairfax endeavoured to reason with the leaders temperately; but as this was ineffective, his lieutenant-general, Cromwell, at length met the Clubmen on Hambledon Hill, near Blandford Forum, in Dorsetshire, where some four thousand of them had taken up a position. He was not the man to stand any nonsense of this sort, and on the first overt act of hostility attacked and dispersed them in his thorough-going fashion. They did not again appear in any organized body, but, as we shall see, cropped up afterwards, sporadically, in North Devon.¹

The approach of the Parliamentary army compelled Goring to concentrate his forces; and Taunton was *ipso facto* relieved, after a siege, lasting many weeks, during which the town had been gallantly defended by Blake. Goring's army was little inferior in strength to that of Fairfax. Cromwell believed that Goring "stood upon the advantage of strong passes, staying until the rest of his recruits came up to his Army, with a resolution not to engage until Grenville and Prince Charles his men were come up to him."² This however, was an overestimate of his antagonist's prudence. The Royalists may be said to have been engaged in the dangerous operation of (to use an Americanism) swopping

¹ No writer of that period has taken the trouble to explain why the "Clubmen" were so designated. It would appear, however, from an expression used by Sprigge, to the effect that their own clubs ought to be used to beat reason into them, that they were not so called, as has been sometimes supposed, from their having had some sort of organization as a *club*, but because they were mostly armed with clubs.

² Carlyle's *Cromwell*, ed. 1857, iii. 397 (appendix).

horses while crossing a stream. Goring had only a few days before written a complaining letter to the King, asking to be relieved of his command.¹ He was now writing to Lord Colepepper at Barnstaple that he had resolved to draw out all his forces to Chard, not having sufficient to oppose Massey, who was at Dorchester, and leave Taunton secure—that he objected to the commission of Marshal of the field given to Grenville by the Prince at Barnstaple, as Lord Wentworth had had promise of command under him—and that he wished Grenville might not come to the army until the difficulty of command was clear.² Such were the punctilios which occupied the attention of the Royalists in the presence of the enemy. Grenville, on the other hand, who ought to have supported Goring, but remained in fact at Ottery St. Mary, carrying out the high-handed proceedings on his own account which have been alluded to, was writing “a very insolent letter” to the Prince of Wales’s Council, sending back the commission which the Prince had given him. A force had been hastily dispatched from Barnstaple to his assistance, but after a day’s march had been recalled, as it seems to have occurred to the Prince’s Council, that in the imminent prospect of Fairfax’s advance, it would be necessary rather to strengthen Barnstaple, where the Prince then was.³

¹ This letter, or rather a fragment of it, has been printed by Eliot Warburton (*Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii. 215-6), but is misplaced and misdated in that work. The correct date undoubtedly is June 25, 1645.

² Letter of 29th of June, 1645, printed in Lister’s *Life of Clarendon*, iii. 22.

³ Clarendon’s *History of the Rebellion*, pp. 596-7.

After various manœuvres of the two opposing armies in the south-eastern part of Somersetshire, Goring was brought to action on the 10th of July, near Langport, and completely defeated with heavy loss. Fourteen hundred prisoners and twelve hundred horses fell into the possession of the victorious Parliamentarians. Cromwell took a conspicuous part in this important engagement, and in the pursuit which followed. His own animated description of the battle has been repeatedly printed.¹

The departure of Prince Charles and his Council from Barnstaple took place a day or two after this disaster to the royal arms. It had been previously decided upon, as we know, and had been doubtless precipitated by the near approach of the Parliamentary army which threatened the Prince's security in North Devon.

The proceedings of Sir Thomas Fairfax's army during the next three months and until it entered Devonshire were of the greatest moment in connection with the progress of the Civil War; and it may be said that the eyes of the whole kingdom were concentrated upon them. But they can be only shortly described here. Meanwhile, I shall follow, for the present, the shattered forces of the Royalist army.

On the day after the battle of Langport Lord Goring reached Dunster Castle, and in the security

¹ Carlyle's *Cromwell*, iii., Appendix, 397; Sanford's *Studies and Illustrations of the Great Rebellion*, p. 625.

of that fortress wrote at night to Lord Digby, for the King's information, an account of his reverse. In his estimate, the extent of his losses was of course minimized, and it varied very considerably from that given by Cromwell on the other side. He admitted, however, the serious effect of the disaster, "for," he writes, "there is so great a terror and dejection amongst our men, that I am confident, at this point, they could not be brought to fight against half their number." He supposed that he had then with him between three and four thousand Foot and some two thousand five hundred Horse; most of the Western Horse, by which Sir Richard Grenville's contingent was probably meant, had gone home of their own accord. His belief was that Fairfax would follow him with the whole Parliamentary army, but that if all the Royalist forces from before Plymouth and those scattered in Cornwall and Devon could be drawn together, Fairfax might be successfully resisted, otherwise that these men ought to be put into garrisons. But he hopes "these counties are so loyal and honest that they will unite all their force and power to oppose these villains." Finally, he hints that he has "a way propounded of getting an army very quickly, which appears very probable." What this was is not revealed. The letter is dated from "Dunster, July 12, 1645, 1 at morning, Saturday."¹

Lord Goring with, according to his own estimate, six thousand Horse and Foot—the remains of the army which so lately had been looked upon as the

¹ Printed in Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii. 137.

main stay of King Charles's cause—continued his retreat from Dunster and he himself reached Barnstaple, which Prince Charles and his retinue had just left, on the 13th of July. The Clubmen as soon as they had seen which was the stronger side, arranged themselves accordingly, and these country-people hung upon the retreating Royalists, "knocking all stragglers or wearied soldiers on the head." Goring, in a sullen humour, seems to have spent some days at Barnstaple, giving himself "his usual licence of drinking," and vituperating the King as well as the Prince's Council and all their works.¹

Lord Goring's beaten, disorganized, and mutinous army, whose bad reputation had preceded it, was quartered in the district around Barnstaple; the Horse, says Lord Clarendon, "committing such intolerable insolences and disorders as alienated the hearts of those who were best affected to the King's service."² This admission of the too candid friend is amply confirmed. Richard Baxter, the eminent divine, who was with Fairfax's army, says in his autobiography that when they followed Lord Goring westward they found that his soldiers, many of whom were foreigners, of all the armies of the King were most hated by the people for their incredible profaneness and their unmerciful plundering. The foreign

¹ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 596 a. Sir Richard Bulstrode, who was present during this retreat, says that the shattered troops of Goring's army left Dunster on the right (going therefore by way of Dulverton and South Molton), and made little or no stop until they came to Torrington, where they quartered, and after some days marched towards Barnstaple (*Memoirs*, 1721, p. 140).

² *Ibid.*, p. 596 b.

element in Goring's force was a French brigade, consisting of three regiments of Horse, under the command of a Colonel Laplande.

So far as is now apparent, Lord Goring had selected the fortified position of Barnstaple as a rendezvous for what remained of his army, and as a basis for his future operations, offensive or defensive, as occasion might require. He was not sure how soon the Parliamentary generals would be upon him. In the intervals of his carouses it was therefore desirable for him to take advantage of the respite, as he himself called it, to recruit his broken forces. A contemporary diurnal briefly mentions that he had secured two hundred barrels of gunpowder in the Castle of Barnstaple, made a few additional works there, and imposed a new oath on the inhabitants which had driven divers of them away.¹

Another diurnal, of July 23-29, reports that "when Goring was at Ilfordcombe [which must have been at about this time] he prest three barques to go to Wales for men from the King, to come over to strengthen him."² This, probably, is a key to the meaning of the profound scheme which Goring alluded to in his letter to Digby. The King was at this time at Ragland Castle, vainly flattering himself that a fresh body of troops in Wales would rise up at his bidding. Goring may have thought that if this reinforcement were landed in North

¹ *The Moderate Intelligencer*, No. 24, August 7-15, 1645, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxx.

² *Perfect Passages*, &c., King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xvii.

Devon he might be able to make a successful stand there against the forces of Fairfax. But the course of events soon dispelled any such hopes, if they were ever entertained. He was already discovering that his own forces, especially of Foot, from want of pay and their utter disorganization, were rapidly melting away.

The letter of Goring's which I shall here introduce was written from Bideford a few days later. The "differences" between the commanders of the Western army again crop up in this letter, and an indication appears of the *rapprochement* between Goring and Grenville which Lord Clarendon mentions. But it was soon terminated by a curt letter, in which Grenville told Goring that "he would have no more to do with him."

[*Lord Goring to Lord Colepepper.*]

MY LORD,

I have desired Mr Paramour to let y^r L^p know in what necessity these forces are for want of money, especially the officers both of horse and foot. I have a great desire to reforme both, but it cannot be done without some pay to them. Most of S^r Richard Grenvilles men are gone away : some say he has sent for them ; and the differences encrease dayly betweene him and S^r John Berkly. If the Prince doe not interpose his authority speedily all will goe to wrack ; and if there be not a course taken that all the souldiers may have pay as well as some wee shall never keep the rest in obedience. I doe believe if wee tooke the best course to reconcile these differences, and to overcome these difficultyes, wee might keepe Devonshyre and Cornwall, though all the rest of the kingdom were united agaynst us, for which end

I should be very glad to have a speedy meeting with some of y^r L^{ps}, now the rebbels give us this respite. They are before Bridgwater.

I am

Y^r Lo^{pps} most humble serv^t,

Bidiford, 18 July.

GEORGE GORING.¹

From the date of the foregoing letter until the middle of August Goring's Foot, reduced to about 1,300, occupied Torrington. His Horse, still numbering, it was estimated, about 3,000, in a loose and disorderly state, were quartered all over the country between that town and South Molton. The parish register of Torrington contains several entries of the burial of soldiers during this period. One of these, in August, is as follows :—

Henry Boose a soldyer who was hangd att the Pillory for mutuny a lancashire man was buried y^e xith day.

Goring appears to have been the guest of Mr. Henry Rolle at Stevenstone, from which place several of his letters at this time are dated. The next letter which I shall insert is one from Lord Colepepper, giving an account of the prospects which the Prince's Council had of reinforcing the army from Cornwall. Goring, it seems, had been recently at Launceston. Barnstaple, as the magazine from which supplies of ammunition were to be drawn, is alluded to :—

[*Lord Colepepper to Lord Goring.*]

My L^d,

The last night late I received yo^r L^{ps} of the same day,

¹ Original in the Bodleian Library. Printed in *Lister's Life of Clarendon*, iii. 23.

wth much troble that y^e foote are lessened to so small a number as 1300, and that y^e officers license their men. All possible diligence is and shall be used here to gett up as many of the runawayes as may be. Toching the want of men in the Devonshire garisons, the Prince desireth y^r L^p to doe therein uppon informaçon of their condition, and of the moçon of the enemy, as y^r L^p shall thinke best. Wee cannot make any certaine judgm^t of what may be relyed uppon from this county until after the generall rendezvous, w^{ch} is to be on Thursday next, when y^r L^p shall have a particular account of the fullness of the apparence, only the gentlemen seem very forward in the service, and hopefull to bringe up full numbers. Concerninge the leade, y^r L^p will please to remember the conclusion made thereupon when y^r L^p parted hence, w^{ch} was that y^r L^p would endeav^r to send horses for fowre tunns of it from Barnstable, and to have it made from mouldes from Exeter. Our magazins of victualls fill remarkably well. This is all I have to trouble y^r L^p wth for the present; being, my L^p,

Y^r L^{ps} most humble serv^t

Lanceston, 28 July, 1645.

J. C.

The Prince intendeth to send speedily to the King, by w^{ch} opportunity any dispatches from y^r L^p to Court may be conveyed, if y^r L^p thinks fitt.¹

On the same day Goring is writing to Lord Colepepper, and giving no very sanguine report of the condition of his forces: he thinks it not likely that Sir Richard Grenville will contribute much to the levies they expect out of Cornwall and Devonshire; the old Cornish slip away daily; he sees no probability of getting a considerable body together

¹ Original in the Bodleian Library. Printed in Lister's *Clarendon*, iii. 25.

that will fight, in the poverty and distractions they are now in; thinks he has two thousand Horse and Foot that will hold out as long as they have victuals and ammunition, and wishes to be advised where to dispose these men. "Providing for the worst will not disapoynt the best" (a proverbial maxim which may be worth preservation).¹

Meanwhile, during these harvest months, almost the whole of North Devon was overrun by Goring's rascally troopers, and the people were harassed by his arbitrary measures for raising reinforcements of Foot. In all the small towns, on the market-days, drums were beaten up and proclamations were read summoning recruits, but apparently with but little success. The Clubmen were simultaneously holding threatening meetings in the characteristic temper of an angry neutrality. The following is a specimen of one of Goring's warrants issued at Okehampton:—

Whereas an Army of Rebels are come into the West, to rob and plunder his Majesties good subjects, these are to require you in the King's name, that you raise all such as are able to beare Armes for the defence of your owne Country-mens estates and lives, and to oppose all Theeves, Plunderers, and Rebels, and let them be in readines to appeare at a generall Rendezvous to be appoynted by me, where they shall be mustered, and receive Armes from Exeter; that so you may be the more able to defend your selves and Countrey.²

¹ Goring to Colepepper, 28th of July. Original in the Bodleian Library. Printed in Lister's *Life of Clarendon*, iii. 24.

² *Perfect Occurrences*, &c., July 25-Aug. 1, 1645, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xvii.

The diurnal in which this is printed assumed it to be a summons to the Clubmen to take up arms on the Royalist side. It is possible that Goring may have attempted, as he had done in Somersetshire, to coquet with these malcontents; but their leaning was now very decidedly to the other side, and the document is more probably one of Goring's peremptory warrants to the constables of the surrounding parishes to impress men by the method then usual.

The Prince with his Council remained at Launceston. Arthur Trevor, who was there in August, wrote to the Marquess of Ormonde: "Goring's army is broken and all his men in disorder. He hates the Council here and I find plainly there is no love lost. In short, the war is at an end in the West; each one looks for a ship, and nothing more."¹ Besides the divisions amongst the chief officers, which Secretary Nicholas gave amongst the reasons why the King's affairs in the West were at this time in such a hopeless condition, the country "was so disaffected," he declared, "by reason of the soldiers rapine and oppression as y^e country rises against them whensoever they come into any place not in a body, and the countrey is soe wasted as it cannot feede them when they lye together in a body."² At the same time, the Royalist Commissioners at Exeter were pressing all from whom money could be wrung for the weekly martial rates, and, to mitigate these excesses, agreeing to double the assessments if Goring would restrain his men. We have Lord Clarendon's

¹ Carte's *Life of Ormonde*, 1736, App, iii. 422.

² Nicholas Correspondence, Evelyn's *Diary*, &c., iv. 180.

authority for stating that he appropriated the money to his own purposes, but did nothing to abate the disorders.¹

With the ostensible object of putting down the increasing obstructiveness or aggression of the Clubmen, Goring, in September, issued a proclamation which throws some additional light upon the character of this curious association. The proclaimer's style runs: "George Lord Goring, Generall of all His Majesties Forces of Horse, that are, or shall be raised in the Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales, and Lieutenant-Generall to His Highesse Prince Rupert of this Western Army." The following is an abstract of the document:—Whereas divers Inhabitants of this County and Somerset, under pretence of securing themselves from the plundering of the soldiers, have assembled in a tumultuous manner, &c.; that if any such violence has been used it hath not been tolerated by the principal officers, &c. (a time-honoured palliative); requires all persons that lately under the name of Clubmen have taken up arms or assisted the enemy or opposed His Majesty's Forces in the levying of the usual rates, contributions or provisions for His Majesty's Army or Garrisons, to submit and bring in their arms either into this Army or into any of His Majesty's Forts or Garrisons nearest to them within two days; will proceed against such persons as enemies to the Good and Peace of these Counties who shall adhere to the enemy, or assist them with any kind of Provisions or Supplies, or refuse to obey

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 607 b.

all such warrants as shall be sent them from the Commanders of His Majesty's Armies or Garrisons, or forsake any of their Houses upon the approach of His Majesty's Forces, &c. This proclamation is dated "at Exon, the 20 day of September, 1645."¹

Meanwhile, Lord Colepepper, who was again at Barnstaple, writing from thence to Lord Digby, the King's Secretary, on the 18th September, submitted that if Goring waited until Fairfax came up all his Horse would be lost, and urged that the only thing left for him was to break at once through the Parliamentary Army.²

At this time, all the forces that could be got together were concentrated about Tiverton. Sir Richard Grenville had used to the utmost his authority as Sheriff of Devon to raise reinforcements of Foot, but without much effect. He himself, in one of his erratic moods, was absent in Cornwall, and chafing between Goring and the Prince's Council. Of his four Cornish regiments which had been under his command in Devonshire, his own, Tremaine's, and the two Arundells', there were not above two hundred left, the rest having run from their colours; and of other Cornishmen not above one hundred and fifty came to the muster at Crediton. They were, in fact, again standing upon their right of refusal to be drawn away from their own county.³

¹ One of the original broadsides, beautifully printed, is in the Library of the British Museum. King's Pamphlets, Broad-sides, vol. iv.

² *Calendar of Clarendon State Papers*, No. 1962.

³ Letter from Lord Colepepper to the Prince's Council. Exeter, 28th Sept., 1645. Original in the Bodleian Library. Printed in Lister's *Clarendon*, iii. 26-29.

If this were a general narrative of the Civil War, a due sense of proportion would require that a considerable space should here be given to an account of the proceedings of the Parliamentary army, under Sir Thomas Fairfax, during the three months which elapsed from the time of the battle of Langport until the army entered Devonshire. This remarkable series of "leaguers, storms, onslaughts and outfalls," which Sprigge has described in detail, led up to the subsequent operations in North Devon, and, so far, has an interest in connection with this relation; but it can only be briefly outlined.

Lord Goring's army having been for the time disposed of, Fairfax invested Bridgwater which was thought by the Royalists to be impregnable. After much deliberation, winding up with two stimulating sermons on the Lord's Day previously by Mr. Peters and Mr. Bowles, it was stormed early in the morning of Monday the 21st July, when the outer town was taken and burnt during the fray. On the 23rd, Sir Edmond Wyndham, the governor, surrendered with his garrison of about one thousand men. Many of Essex's old troops were in Fairfax's army, and these on their first contact with the Western men seem to have been mindful of their reverse of the previous year; for Sprigge, in an otherwise enigmatical passage, takes credit for their forbearance to the prisoners, "in regard our souldiers had suffered so much and Cornwall was so near."¹ Sherborne Castle, a strong moated fortress, the accumulated work of centuries, had long been an offence to the Parliament. It

¹ *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 74; ed. 1854, p. 77.

belonged to the Earl of Bristol, but was now stoutly held by Sir Lewis Dives and a resolute garrison. After a fortnight's siege and sap, a breach having been effected, the castle was stormed and taken on the 15th of August. It was suspected that probably either Prince Rupert, who had three thousand disposable Horse and Foot in Bristol, would now attempt to succour Goring in Devonshire, or that Goring would break through with his Horse and join Rupert; and therefore it was much debated whether the main body of the army should next advance farther West or attempt the reduction of Bristol. The latter was the enterprise decided upon; but Massey's brigade of Horse was left in the neighbourhood of Taunton to watch Goring and fall upon his flank if he should make a forward movement. Bristol was consequently invested on the 22nd of August. It was weakly defended. The occasion was not one for the display of Rupert's proverbial talent for attack, and he had lost the moral support of enthusiasm for his cause; he believed that after the battle of Naseby the chances of his uncle's success in this war had evaporated. After various parleyings, without result, the city was assaulted on all sides on the 10th of September, when Rupert surrendered this important stronghold. The army of the Parliament having achieved this great success had still, before turning to the West, to reduce the many isolated fortified places which, says Sprigge, using a forcible, if inelegant, metaphor, "like vipers in the bowels, infested the midland parts" and obstructed communication between London and the West. This

work was accomplished by detached brigades. One of these under the command of Lieutenant-General Oliver Cromwell, after reducing Devizes and Winchester, besieged and took Basing House, the magnificent fortress-mansion of the Marquess of Winchester, the storming, sacking, and destruction of which have left an indelible mark upon English history.

The main body of the army, in the mean time, was marching from Bristol by easy stages on a circuitous line through Wiltshire and Dorsetshire towards the eastern border of Devonshire. This route had probably been adopted as being through a country more capable of sustaining the troops who, in consequence of their being without money, had to subsist by taking free quarter on the march. The army of Fairfax reached Chard on the 6th of October, and remained there a week, during which time the expected convoy of treasure for the pay of the troops came in. On Monday, the 13th, the army resumed its march, and advanced to Axminster.

It will now be necessary to revert to the dispositions made by the Royalists to meet this new but not unexpected invasion of the county of Devon.

Lord Goring's head-quarters had been at Tiverton in the beginning of September. In a letter to the Prince's Council, dated from Exeter the 28th of the month, Lord Colepepper writes :—

Goring finding Tiverton no safe quarters for the body of his foot intended to quarter them at Culhampton [Cullompton]

ton] & Bradninch, possessing two strong houses towards Ottery & Lyme and one in the north of Devon, and to lay his horse behind the foot until he may be strengthened with more foot and enabled to advance.¹

Goring's centre was, in fact, pushed forward at this time to Cullompton, where he made some attempt to fortify the east side of the town and the church. His head-quarters were at Thorverton. Of the "two strong houses" which he occupied on his right, Poltimore, the mansion of the Parliamentary, Sir John Bampffield, was certainly one; Columb-John was probably the other. His fortified outpost on the left in the north of Devon was Eggesford House, belonging to Lord Chichester, a Royalist. This was of course the old house close to the church, which was taken down early in the last century when it came into the possession of Mr. Fellowes. The house which replaced it has been since destroyed.

A few days later, when Fairfax's advance from the east was not to be doubted, Lord Goring, writing from Exeter to Lord Colepepper, who had returned to the Prince at Launceston, was apparently full of determination to resist. In this letter the jealousies among the Royalist commanders are again conspicuously brought to the front:—

MY LORD,

S^r John Berkley will give y^r L^p a full account of the enemys advance, and of our condition heere. I cannot con-

¹ Original in Bodleian Library. Printed in Lister's *Clarendon*, iii. 26-9.

clude certainly that Fayrfax is so neare us, but because the intelligence comes soe many wayes, wee are very busy providing for them, according to the resolution was taken at our first expectation of them, and I am very confident they shall neyther hurt Exeter nor us. S^r Richard Greenville distracts us extreamly, but when the Prince will be pleased to enable me I hope eyther to bring him into better order, or keepe him from doeing any hurt. I shall not fayle to acquainte y^r L^p with what comes in the knowledge of

Y^r L^{ps} most humble servant,

4 Oct. 9 o'clock. Exeter

GEORGE GORING.¹

For the Right Hon^{ble} The L^d

Culpeper at Launston.

Exeter had a garrison of its own, consisting at this time of about 1,000 Horse and 4,000 Foot, under the command of Sir John Berkeley. It is stated that among the provisions for the resistance of the city to Fairfax's expected attack the "most part of three parishes," presumably in the suburbs, were burnt by Goring's orders "to make the rest more tenable."² It is to this that the allusion in his letter possibly refers.

Goring's activity was spasmodic. At this time the monotony of his usual proceedings was varied by a daring exploit. In the night of the 13th of October, on which day Fairfax's advanced posts were pushed beyond Axminster, Lords Goring, Wentworth, and Miller with a party of Horse, estimated by Sprigge as

¹ Original in the Bodleian Library. Printed in Lister's *Clarendon*, iii. 32.

² Whitelock's *Memorials*, ed. 1682, p. 185. Sprigge mentions this as having been done on the 27th of October, *i.e.*, after Goring had left the city (*Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 150; ed. 1854, p. 161).

about 1,500 in number, which had been occupying and overrunning the country about Ottery St. Mary, made a rapid dash through Honiton, and struck in between Fairfax's outposts and his main quarters. Although rumours of the intended attack seem to have preceded it, a village which Mr. Davidson¹ thinks must have been Membury, was surprised. The Cavaliers took about sixty prisoners in the skirmish, and then made off as rapidly as they had come.

On the 14th, the whole of Fairfax's army advanced to Honiton, and on the following day to Cullompton, which was at once evacuated by Goring's troops, who had established themselves there. These having retired in the direction of Tiverton, although it does not appear that they halted there, Massey, with his brigade of Horse and also a brigade of Foot, was sent after them and ordered to seize that town.

Tiverton was not, in the proper sense, a fortified town; but its castle, together with the fine parish church, on the north side of which it stood, separated from the churchyard only by the castle-moat, had been put into a state of defence. Tiverton Castle had been originally a mediæval fortress. Its western face rested on the edge of a scarped cliff, at the foot of which flowed the river Exe. Its defensive walls enclosed a quadrangular area of about an acre in extent; but the eastern front had been replaced in the reign of Elizabeth by a fortified house built by Roger Giffard. A plate in Martin Dunsford's *Historical Memoirs of the Town and Parish of Tiverton*

¹ *Axminster during the Civil War*, p. 19.

(1790) represents the castle-buildings as they stood, probably but little altered since the time of the Civil War, in the year 1730. The large square gate-tower, the conspicuous feature in the east front, is said to have been since lowered, and it is now apparently a storey shorter than it is represented to be in Dunsford's plate. The tower gateway, formed by a Tudor arch, was entered by a drawbridge, hereafter particularly mentioned, which crossed the moat, now filled up. This fortress was held by Sir Gilbert Talbot and a small garrison, consisting of a few Horse and about two hundred Foot. Sir Gilbert Talbot was not a Devonshire man; he had been ambassador to the Venetian Republic, and for some time was in high favour at the Court of King Charles. He appears was to have added some outworks which covered the eastern front of the castle and enclosed the churchyard. Packs of wool were used in the defence of the church itself.

General Massey immediately assaulted the works, and, according to Sir Gilbert Talbot's statement,¹ was repulsed. Fairfax himself then came upon the scene, and batteries were thrown up by his direction. In the afternoon of Sunday, the 19th of October, fire was opened generally on the Royalist defences.

The army of Sir Thomas Fairfax appears to have been attended on this campaign by the probably not always welcome company of civil Commissioners, instructed by Parliament to assist the general with their local knowledge, and to report, from time to

¹ Printed in Harding's *History of Tiverton*, ii., Appendix, 40.

time, the proceedings of the army for the information of the two Houses. Two of these Commissioners, representing Devonshire, were Sir John Bampffield and Sir Samuel Rolle, who have already been noticed. The others, Mr. Francis Buller and Mr. Anthony Nicoll, represented Cornwall. All were themselves trusted Members of Parliament. The letter of these gentlemen, reporting the capture of Tiverton and some other particulars, is of much interest, and will best describe the incident:—

The Committee with Sr Thomas Fairfax at Tiverton to the Speaker.

Sr—In obedience to your Command we came to the Army at Beminster & from thence advanced with them to Chard the Next Day, where they remained some days in Expectation of the Recruits & Money for the Army, & of Money for Major Genⁿ Massey's party. We advanced thence to Lunnington [Honiton], from whence before our advance the Enemy retreated near Exon, till which time they plundered all the Country of Cattle; from Lunnington [Honiton] we advanced to Collamton on Thursday [Sprigge says Wednesday], on which day Maj^r Genⁿ Massey's party came before Tiverton Castle & Summoned it, but received a refusall of Obeying: our Noble Genⁿ having notice of it came on Fryday with a Part of his Army hither, the Residue he sent to Bradnidge [Bradninch]. Yesterday about 2 of the Clock afternoon, some batteries being made, & all things being ready for Storming, for which the Soldiers with much chearfulness prepared themselves: The Genⁿ for the Sparing of blood, with the advice of the Council of war, resolved to Send them a Second Summons, which was Written & Signed, & parties drawn out, who were ready with their scaling ladders to Storm, if a deniall

were returned, but at that Instant it pleased God So to direct our Shot, that it cut the Chain of their drawbridge which Instantly fell down, & the Soldiers spirits were Such that they presently, without order given, entred their Works, the Enemies hearts failed, & we became Suddenly Masters of the Church & Castle & their Strong & Regular works in which they confided; We took the Govern^r S^r Gilbert Talbott & 204 officers & Soldiers (of which You have here Inclosed a list) 4 great Gunns, 30 barrels of Powder with other arms which cannot be particulariz'd, they being dispersed, We lost not a Man in the Storming, nor put any to the Sword.

Sir Gilbert Talbot states that his Horse were mutinous, and that an important post was betrayed by Major Sadler, a renegade from the Parliamentary side, who, in fact, was afterwards executed at Exeter for this act of treachery. Vicars, the fanatic, on the other hand, had no doubt that the cannon-shot which broke the chain of the drawbridge was miraculously directed by the hand of God.

Whatever injury may have been done to the church seems to have been confined to the north side of it. The statement in every edition of Murray's *Handbook for Devon and Cornwall* that the "chapel and monuments of the Courtenays were destroyed" is incorrect; the curious monuments, at least, had certainly disappeared before the time of Tristram Risdon, who wrote not later than in 1630. The elaborate sculptures of Greenway's chapel on the south side of the church escaped untouched. But the iconoclasm of the Puritans was in danger of being aroused, after the struggle, by the discovery of a certain "crucifix" in a wall which

the Cavaliers had built for the strengthening of the porch — an incident of awful significance which General Massey duly reported to his superiors.

The Commissioners go on to describe the condition of Fairfax's army and its want of money. The principle of paying for what was taken had been laid down at starting ; but it had not been always possible to act upon it. The country into which the army had now advanced had been already stripped by the Royalists, and there would be little for the army to subsist upon. They conclude with some camp rumours, which are of much interest in connection with this relation.

Goring is retreated to Chidleigh, what he Intends we know not : our Industrious & Vigilant Genⁿ pitying the condition of the Country, who cry for his Assistance, & Intending Nothing More than the Speeding of the Work, & the Active Maj^r Massey resolves this day to advance in one body towards Goring, who is Strong, & we cannot Divide the Army, Unless Lieuten^t Genⁿ Cromwell come up with his Party, with which its hoped they may divide, & the More Speedily finish the worke in the West, without which the Whole Army Must follow Goring, or run a great hazard : the Prince, Hopton, & Greenville being entred Devon with 4000 foot, & 1500 horse, as we are Informed, we thought it our Duty to present these to you, & leave it to your further consideration : we remain S^r

Your most humble Servants

J. BAMPFIELD

FRAN. BULLER.

20 8bris

SAM. ROLLE

ANTH. NICOLL.²

from Tiverton

1645

² Bishop Burnet's Collection, printed in *Notes and Queries*, 6th Series, vii. 23.

It was immediately after the success of the Parliamentarians at Tiverton that the popular feeling with regard to the two reprobates Goring and Grenville found vent in a curious tract, emanating, it would now be thought, from the very low intellectual stratum that supplies the pabulum of street ballads, which, whether a mere superstitious farrago or a *jeu d'esprit*, is worth noticing here. Its title is all that I can give, and it will probably be deemed sufficient :—

A true and strange Relation of a Boy who was entertained by the Devill to be servant to him with the consent of his Father about Crediton in the West And how the Devill carried him up in the aire, and shewed him the torments of Hell, and some of the Cavaliers there, and what preparation there was made for Goring and Grenville against they came. Also how the Cavaliers went to robbe a Carrier, and how the Carrier and his Horses turned themselves into flames of fire, &c. London, Printed by J. H. 1645.

The King, since the battle of Naseby, had never abandoned the expectation, or at least the hope, that Goring would be able to break through the Parliamentary forces in Somersetshire and join him. By this means he anticipated that an army considerable enough again to take the field, with prospect of successful action against his enemies, might be formed. The Prince and his Council, when at Exeter in September, encouraged the scheme. On the 29th of September the King was writing to Colepepper confirming his views, and urging that Goring "must break through to Oxford with his Horse, and from thence, if he can, find me out wheresoever he shall

understand I shall be ;" but adding in a postscript, "for lord Goring's business, though I wish it, I cannot say it is absolutely practicable."¹ But whatever Goring's own motives may have been—and his fidelity to the cause of King Charles was freely impeached—he had evidently no appetite for such an enterprise. While Fairfax's army was advancing from Honiton to Cullompton, and when some active service might have been done, Goring drew out the thousand Horse from Exeter, and retreated with the whole of his force to Chudleigh, quartering it upon the country lying between that place and Ashburton and Totnes. This proceeding was in direct contravention of the plan of the Prince's Council, which, as settled, was to make a stand with all the available Horse and Foot at Tiverton, and there to risk a battle with Fairfax's army. With that object Sir Richard Grenville, with his three regiments of old Cornish Foot, had already reached Okehampton, which he "barricaded," remaining there, as it turned out, until the end of November. It was at this time that he propounded the notable scheme of cutting "a deep trench from Barnstaple to the south sea for the space of nearly forty miles; by which, he said, he would defend all Cornwall and so much of Devon against the world."²

¹ Letter in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 608 a. In a letter to Secretary Nicholas, of three days' later date, the King writes: "I have commanded him to break through" (Evelyn's *Diary and Correspondence*, iii. 162).

² Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 610 a. Lord Lansdowne, in his Vindication of Sir Richard Grenville, remarks upon this: "Is there anything new or strange in defending a Country by Entrench-

A few days later, the Prince is writing to Lord Goring; understands that he has retired from Exeter to join other forces to resist the enemy; with reference to the usual dispute about precedence—has sent direction to Sir Richard Grenville to receive orders from his lordship, and desires that there be good intelligence and correspondence preserved between them. Probably supposing that nothing more can be done with these refractory generals, he goes on the morrow to Liskeard, there to await events. This letter is dated "Launceston, the 23rd of October."¹

The movements of Fairfax's army for several days after the reduction of Tiverton Castle were of a vacillating character. It was finally determined that no immediate advance in pursuit of the Royalists was desirable, and that the siege of Exeter, or, if that were not feasible, its investment, should be first undertaken. An attempt was consequently made to march round by Newton St. Cyres and occupy Alphington, on the southern side of the city; but it was defeated by the extreme wetness of the weather and the badness of the roads. On the 24th of October, at Crediton, Oliver Cromwell, in advance of his well-seasoned troops, the spoilers of Basing House, rejoined the head-quarters.

ments? Is not the Practice as old as Julius Cæsar, and mentioned by himself in his Commentaries of the War with the ancient Gauls? Was it not thus that the modern Gauls in our own Times defended the French Flanders?" (*Works of the Right Honourable George Granville, Lord Lansdowne*, London, 1732, i. 531). This was in reply to Lord Clarendon's ridicule.

¹ Draught, Bodleian Library. Printed in Lister's *Clarendon*, iii. 34.

In the biographies of Cromwell there is almost a blank during the next two months. There is no doubt however, that, as Lieutenant-General, he was with the army, although Sprigge does not mention him by name, throughout the campaign in Devonshire and Cornwall.

The result of these movements was for the time limited to the straitening of Exeter, on its eastern side ; and a chain of entrenched posts was constructed, extending from Stoke Canon to Topsham, which covered the roads entering Exeter and prevented supplies coming into the city from that part of the county. The main body of the army was established at Ottery St. Mary, where it remained for a month. Most of the men were without shoes or stockings, and there was much sickness and mortality among them. Early in December the army was transferred to Tiverton and Crediton.

A wet autumn was followed, as is usually the case, by a period of very cold weather. From the beginning of December until the middle of January, the country was covered with snow, and a severe frost had set in. Notwithstanding the difficulties which the rigour of the season interposed, the investment of Exeter was extended during the month of December to its western side. Powderham Castle,¹

¹ Sir William Courtenay, whose seat it was, being a minor, does not figure in the transaction. He married in his minority the daughter of Sir William Waller, the Parliamentary General, and granddaughter and eventual heiress of Sir Richard Reynell, of Forde.

a Royalist post which had helped to command the river, was attempted unsuccessfully. It had been strengthened by a detachment thrown into it from Exeter, and it remained in the hands of its defenders. But several isolated country houses, suitable for being garrisoned for the purpose of blockading the city, were seized and occupied. Great Fulford was taken by Colonel Okey and a party of dragoons. A short defence seems to have been made by Sir Francis Fulford and his servants; the remains of a small earth-work, from which tradition says that the house was battered by artillery, are still pointed out in the park.¹ Lord Chichester's house at Eggesford, which had been occupied and made one of Lord Goring's outposts, was also taken by the same party on the 18th of December. The dragoons, apparently by surprise, "got between their sentinel and guard at my lord of Chichester's house." The result of the assault which followed was that the commandant of the little garrison, described as "the eldest Capt. of Cleveland's Brigade," after being "wounded very sore," was taken prisoner with his Lieutenant, a Cornet and six troopers.² Sprigge makes the number rather larger, and adds that nineteen horses were also taken. Canonteign, a fine Elizabethan house, in the Teign valley, which belonged to Mr. Davye,

¹ Sir Francis Fulford's eldest son had been killed before Exeter, in August, 1643. There is at Great Fulford a full-length portrait of Charles I., attributed to Van Dyck, which is said to have been given by Charles II. in acknowledgment of the services of the Fulfords to the royal cause.

² *Moderate Intelligencer*, No 42, Dec. 18-25, '1645, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxxxvii.

and still stands, was next seized and occupied. A party of Royalist Horse, from one of their neighbouring posts, attacked the place before daybreak on the following morning. The loop-holes made in the great oaken entrance-door of the house when it was prepared for defence are yet visible. The assailants, who had burnt the outbuildings, were beaten off by Captain Wogan, commanding the small party of Okey's dragoons, after a fight which lasted for more than four hours. Ashton, the house of Sir George Chudleigh, in the same neighbourhood, was also occupied shortly afterwards. Exeter was thus enclosed, by the end of December, within a ring of fortified posts. Yet no attempt seems to have been made by the garrison of the city to interfere with these operations. The citizens, however, as time went on, were reduced to distress. The allusion of Thomas Fuller, who was one of the beleaguered, to the grateful welcome that was given to the phenomenon of an extraordinary concourse of larks, which visited the southern purlieus of the city, and were captured by thousands, implies this ; and Lord Clarendon mentions that there was an " importunate calling for relief from Exeter."

It will now be desirable to revert to the preparations that were being made, on the other side, to meet the advance westward of the Parliamentary army. At the end of November, Lord Goring, after an ineffectual attempt to open a separate negotiation with Sir Thomas Fairfax, the object of which is only obscurely hinted at, suddenly, on the pretence

that both armies were going into winter quarters, and that his health required attention, abandoned his command and embarked at Dartmouth for France.¹ The truth seems to have been that jealousy of his rivals, intolerance of the authority of the Prince of Wales's Council, and disappointed ambition, overpowered his loyalty, if that indeed was not open to suspicion. He left the country amid the execrations of the people, whom he had harassed and pillaged.

As George Lord Goring returned to England no more, it may be as well to give briefly his subsequent history. He took service in the Spanish Army, in the Netherlands, and afterwards in Spain, where he is said to have ultimately assumed the cowl, as a friar, and to have died (it may be charitably concluded in the odour of sanctity), during the lifetime of his father, the Earl of Norwich.²

The defection of Lord Goring was undoubtedly a relief to the able men who were administering what was now nominally the Prince of Wales's Army. But new difficulties arose from the inveterate jealousies of the commanders. Sir Richard Grenville, about the end of November, withdrew his force from Okehampton, and retired into Cornwall, in defiance of orders to the contrary. Lord Wentworth,³ upon

¹ His letter to the Prince of Wales of Nov. 20, announcing this intention, is among the Clarendon MSS. in the Bodleian Library, No. 2033.

² Collins's *Peerage*, ed. 1812, xix. 459.

³ Thomas Lord Wentworth, of Nettlested, was eldest son of Thomas first Earl of Cleveland. He had been summoned to Parliament in his father's barony in 1640. Lord Clarendon does not give him a favour-

whom the command of Goring's Horse had devolved, and who was established at Ashburton—his troopers distributed among the surrounding villages, opposed an imperious, refractory, and offensive temper to the Prince's Council. The young Prince, who was of course only a puppet, was led hither and thither by the supposed exigencies of the moment. He had been staying for a time at Truro, and giving countenance and encouragement by the magic influence of Royalty to the levies which were being made in his name throughout Cornwall; for it was on the well-tried Cornish Militia and trained bands—loyal to a man—that the Prince had to rely in this crisis to make up the number of Foot proportionate, as was thought indispensably necessary, to his strong body of Horse. The exclusively Cornish character, however, of the Royalist army of the West, which was noticed in the earliest period of the war, no longer existed, Devonshire levies now formed part, but apparently only a small part, of the Prince's force of Foot. Sir Richard Grenville by his authority as Sheriff of Devon had, as we have seen, pressed some into the service, and Lord Goring, by his system of terrorism, others; but they had found no ready or willing response from the old trained soldiers of the county, whose predilection, if they had any at all, was generally for the Parliament.

able character, and alludes to his "after-dinner" temper. He was, in short, a typical Cavalier. His daughter Henrietta Maria, who became Baroness Wentworth in her own right, was the mistress of the Duke of Monmouth.

The members of the Prince's Council were at this time occupied in providing for the equipment and victualling of the army. We have seen Sir Edward Hyde condescending to details of arms and ammunition; and Lord Capel, as we learn from his correspondence, was investigating the problems, how much biscuit a given number of sacks of flour ought to produce, and how many packhorses were necessary to carry the biscuit to the army. The veteran Earl of Brentford was the military adviser.

Money, too, was of course needed. The Prince had been drawing what could be got from the revenue of his Duchy of Cornwall. The assessment of martial rates by his Commissioners, both in Cornwall and in Devon, never ceased so long as a Royalist trooper lingered in a district. As a further resource there were the Royalist gentry, on whom the old expedient of exacting a "benevolence" could be tried. I am able to give a specimen of this form of appeal taken from the original:—



After Our hearty Commendations, We have yet forborn, since our coming into these parts, to desire any extraordinary supply from any persons towards the defence of that County, against the Invasion of the Enemy, being in truth so sensible of the great pressures it hath already suffered, that we hoped rather to have eased them of those burthens voluntarily submitted to, out of their great Zeal and Affection to the Service of our Royall Father, then to have invited them to undergo new. But taking notice that the

continuance of this unhappy Warre draws with it many inevitable charges of provisions of Ammunition and other necessities for the Armies and Garrisons, and defence of the Frontiers of that County, and that the season of the year, is like, by Gods blessing, to give you opportunity in a good degree, to provide for your future security, and it being evident that no expedient can more advance a Peace (for the procurement whereof We have offered Our mediation, and shall pursue all means to effect it with Our utmost power and endeavours) then an evidence that We are like, by an Union and good Affection of those two most Western Counties, to defend those and Our self against the fury of Invaders, We cannot but expect a cheerfull concurrence from all persons well affected to the publique Peace, the Security of this County, or to Us, (who shall not forget the alacrity they shall expresse herein) to what We shall propose to that purpose; and therefore We have resolved to try the affections of severall well disposed persons for the loan of such moderate summes of Money, which in this necessitous time may be agreeable to their abilities, and yet being multiplied by the number of the Lenders, may, in a good degree, support the extraordinary charges of that County: Amongst those We have thought fit to desire you (who it may be may find a more extraordinary Obligation upon yourself, to expresse your affection to this County, and to the Service of your Royall Father) to lend unto Us, the Summe of Twentie pounds and that you pay the same within six dayes after the receipt of these Our Letters, to *George Kendall* of the City of *Exeter*, Gentleman, whom We have appointed to be Treasurer of these Moneys thus borrowed, or to such whom he shall appoint to receive the same; And that you may be sure that these Moneys shall be issued to no other use, then the publique Service, as Victualling and Fortifying the Garrisons, buying of Arms and Ammunition, and the like; We have ap-

pointed the said Treasurer to dispose of all Moneys which shall be paid to him in such manner as he shall from time to time receive directions from the Commissioners, or any three of them, and not otherwise. And as We shall take your readinesse to gratifie Us herein, as a great Testimony of your Affection to Peace and Us; So We doubt not, you will not give Us cause, by your refusall, to suspect either, and to proceed accordingly. And so We bid you heartily farewell.

Given at Our Court at Launceston the 2. day of October, 1645.

CHARLES P.
By his highness Comaund
in Councell

RIC. FANSHAWE.

Jo. Bury Esq^r.

Endorsed—For John Bury of Bury in Lapford Esqr. Sealed with impressed stamp—the Prince's arms surrounded by the legend *Carolus D. G. Mag. Britannia princeps*. Foolscap sheet. The words "Twentie pounds," the signature, counter-signature, and address, are in MS.¹

From Truro the Prince returned into Devonshire at the end of December, and fixed his Court at Tavistock. From thence he paid a visit to Totnes and Dartmouth. The purpose of these movements was the organization of a plan of campaign for opposing Fairfax's army and relieving Exeter.

Early in January, the military plans of the Prince's Council were brought to a further stage of development. By this time 2,400 of the Cornish

¹ The original is in the possession of Mrs. Russell, widow of the late Richard Bury Russell, Esq.

trained bands had come in at Tavistock. Grenville's three old regiments, numbering 800 men altogether, had been pushed forward under Major-General Molesworth, and again occupied Okehampton; these were supported by a brigade of Horse. There were 800 Foot, under Wentworth, in the South Hams; 1,500 more were expected out of Exeter; and the Governor of Barnstaple had promised 500.¹ These made up altogether 6,000 Foot. The Horse were estimated to be 5,000. These forces constituted, on paper, a respectable army, not inferior in numerical strength to that of Fairfax. The difficulty of course was to get them together for combined action. Totnes was selected as the principal base of operations, where the Foot from Tavistock were to join Wentworth's Horse. The forces from Okehampton and Barnstaple were apparently to make a diversion on the left or to combine with the main body, as might be found expedient. The Prince was to command in person; and it was no doubt thought that his presence would add lustre to a military programme, which, if successful, would prove a turning-point in the course of the war.

It is not too much to say that the first sharp onslaught of the advanced guard of Fairfax's army hopelessly dissipated this scheme; and the incident owes a certain dramatic completeness to the accidental fact that the stroke was inflicted by Oliver Cromwell.

Communication with Exeter, it would seem, was still possible; for a Proclamation by the Prince was

¹ Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, pp. 613-4.

at this time issued from thence (if the imprint is to be trusted), of which the following is a copy, taken from one of the original broadsides in the Library of the British Museum :—

By His Highnesse, the Prince of Great Britain, Duke of Cornwall and Albany, Highest Captain Generall of all His Majesties Forces raised and to be raised within the Kingdom of England, Dominion of Wales and Town of Berwick, &c.

A PROCLAMATION, For all persons within our Quarters in the County of Devon, able to bear Arms, not being otherwise employed by His Highnesse, or dispenced withall, to attend His Highnesse now advancing in Person to meet the Rebels. As also for a Generall Supplication to be made in all Churches of Devon and Exeter, on Sunday the 4 of January, for Gods blessing on His Highnesse, and his Forces.

WHEREAS, upon the motion of the Enemy on this side Exeter, We have resolved in Our own Person to repair to Our Army, & to that End We resolve with all possible expedition to advance with Our Forces, hoping, by the blessing of God to expell the Enemy from this County. We have thought fit to publish and declare this Our resolution, desiring and requiring all Loyall and able men of what degree or quality soever within Our Quarters in that County as well those of the Trained-Bands, as all others able to bear Arms, who are not otherwise employed or dispenced with by Us, to repair to Us very speedily in person, to Our assistance, with such Arms as they can bring ; And We must professe that We shall impute the absence of any person, not so employed or dispenced with as aforesaid, to want of Loyalty, or want of Courage, both which at so important a time, and upon so important

an occasion, We hold equally odious. And for the procuring a blessing from God upon this Our first enterprize, which We undertake for his Service, and for the procuring a blessed Peace upon this miserable Kingdom, towards the which Our entreaties and earnest desires of mediation have been rejected, We desire that on Sunday next a generall Supplication may be made in all the Churches within Our Quarters, for Gods blessing upon Us and Our Forces, intending also to see the like Supplication solemnly made by the whole Army, when We shall have drawn it into a body. And the High-Sheriffe of Devon is to cause this Our Declaration and Proclamation to be speedily publisht in all Market-Towns & Publike Meetings in Our Quarters there, and read in all the Churches & Chappels within the said County, We having directed the like to be done in Our Dutchy of Cornwall, and hereby likewise directing the like to be done in the City of Exeter.

CHARLES P.

Given at our Court at
Tavistoke the 29 of Decemb.
1645.

By His Highnesse Command in Councill.

RICH: FANSHAWE.

Imprinted at Exeter by Robert Barker, and John Bill,
Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majesty. 1645.¹

Figuratively, the back of the Parliament was set up by this manifesto. As soon as the document became known at Westminster "the House [of Commons] appointed a day to consider of this business of the Prince."²

¹ The essential part, from the word "Whereas," is printed in black letter in the original.

² Whitelock's *Memorials*, p. 193.

On the morning after the supplications of the Church for the success of the Prince's arms had been offered up—it may almost be said before their echoes had died away—"a private consultation was had" at the Parliamentary head-quarters, Sprigge informs us, "and divers Officers of the Army sought counsel of Heaven that day (keeping it as a private day of humiliation) in answer whereto, God inclined their hearts to resolve of an Advance."¹

Before resuming an account of the proceedings of the opposing armies, I shall return to the affairs of Barnstaple which we left, it will be remembered, in the middle of July when Lord Goring, with his broken forces, for a time found refuge in the town after his defeat at Langport.

In the account given in the earlier part of this narrative it has been seen how the Works originally intended for the defence of Barnstaple were gradually developed under the Corporation *régime*. Sir Edward Hyde's remarkably emphatic praise of the fortifications in the month of May, in this year (1645), will have enabled us to form some idea of the actual fortress, if it may be so called, which Sir Allen Apsley was holding for the King. In July, the town had been deemed by the King and his advisers so safe that it had been resolved to form there a great magazine which should be supplied from South Wales for the support of Goring's army—almost in anticipation, it would seem, of the reverse which

¹ *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 163; ed. 1854, p. 176.

actually happened to it.¹ The design, so far as the sending of supplies from Wales was concerned, was probably interrupted by the appearance at about the same time of a Parliamentary squadron in the Bristol Channel. The threatening advance of Fairfax's army in August was a sufficient reason, however, for the measures apparently taken by Sir Allen Apsley for still further strengthening the defences of the town. There is a warrant among the Clarendon State Papers in the Bodleian Library, directed by Sir Edward Hyde, on the 21st of August, to Cadwallader Jones, Collector-General of Customs, for the delivery of £500 worth of wool to George Potter for the use of Sir Allen Apsley, Governor of Barnstaple.² At the then price of wool this quantity would be equal to between fifty and sixty packs of the ordinary size, or of 240 lbs. each. The use of packs of wool for defensive purposes was not uncommon during the war. The wool appears to have been part of a cargo out of the *Fame* of London lying at Dartmouth, the sale of which realized £4,000; but how the Royalists became possessed of it is nowhere mentioned.³

But a more immediate danger seems to have impended. The antagonism of the Clubmen, which Lord Goring had vainly tried to quell, naturally spread like wildfire, and the garrison of Barnstaple incurred its resentment. The King's forces, says a Parliamentary diurnal, which were placed in the town

¹ Lord Digby's letter to Prince Rupert. Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii. 141.

² *Calendar of Clarendon State Papers*, No. 1941.

³ *Ibid.*, No. 1994.

contrary to stipulation, were "wronging honest people and plundering them." The Clubmen of Ashford and Southmolton (a singular conjunction) are mentioned as the ringleaders. They declared for the Parliament, encountered the Royalists, "killed the Governor of Barnstaple, Sir Leven [*sic*] Apsley, and divers of his party,"¹ and blocked up the town. Whatever may be the real version of this affair, and further light upon it is wanting, it is certain that Sir Allen Apsley did not meet the fate which is described. Lord Colepepper, who was at Barnstaple and wrote from thence on the 18th of September, made no allusion to the incident. However, something exceptional must have taken place which affected the Royalist force holding Barnstaple, irrespective of the general stress of the war which pervaded the whole county, for, writing from Launceston to Lord Goring on the 25th of October, Prince Charles desires that in consequence of the distressed state of the garrison of Barnstaple, the twelve weeks' contribution for that Hundred may be suspended for the present.² This, it may be said, is rather paradoxical. It is certainly not quite clear how the garrison would benefit by the relaxation of the pressure upon the inhabitants of the Hundred who, so far as we know, were unfriendly and even, as there is the foregoing incident to show, actively hostile to it.

Those, if there are any, who may have hesitated to credit the thoroughness with which Barnstaple

¹ Whitelock's *Memorials*, under date Sept. 19, 1645.

² *Calendar of Clarendon State Papers*, No. 2001, Rough draught, i. 283.

was fortified, will have found perhaps some little difficulty in accepting the item of the Summary, quoted some way back, which refers to the "demolishing of houses." I am now able to place in this juxtaposition a story from Mrs. Hutchinson's *Memoirs*, relating to her brother's connection with Barnstaple, which incidentally corroborates the statement. It appears that Sir Allen Apsley, after he had quitted Barnstaple, was sued by an inhabitant, whom Mrs. Hutchinson describes as a "wicked woman who had the worst and the smoothest tongue that ever her sex made use of to mischief," for the damage which she had sustained by Sir Allen having pulled down her house when fortifying the town. The lady, whose name is not mentioned, pursued him with a malignity described as "venomous and devilish" (from which we may see how a gentle Puritan could use strong language on occasion), and by a course of conduct for which, if Mrs. Hutchinson's meaning is rightly apprehended, these expressions can scarcely be said to be undeserved. Sir Allen's answer to the suit was sufficiently simple—that the house was pulled down before he was Governor of the place.¹ As there was a doubt on this vital point, it seems by implication that the case was not a solitary one, and that the destruction of other houses involved the cause of the doubt. The houses were most probably suburban, were not included within the lines of defence, and were demolished to prevent their becoming shelter for the enemy.

¹ *Memoirs*, &c., ed. 1810, ii. 184-6.

One of the few tangible local evidences of the effects of the Civil War, which survive in North Devon, is an interesting one associated with the church tower of Pilton. Connected with Barnstaple by a short bridge, which spanned the deep narrow bed of the North Yeo, and a long causeway across an intervening marsh, Pilton was almost a suburb of the town, and consequently partook in some degree of its fortunes during the war. The village climbed the slope of a slight eminence, on the summit of which stood the parish church. It was on the northern side of the town of Barnstaple, the side least open to attack, and although too distant to be included within the line of fortification, might have been considered either a defensive outpost of the garrison, or, in the possible contingency of its being occupied by an enemy, a source of considerable annoyance.

The tower of Pilton church is a plain quadrangular structure, without buttresses. It is of unusually large dimensions, being about 24 feet square. The upper stage, which is about 35 feet, or nearly one half, of the whole height of the present tower, shows still the evidence of its being of newer work than the lower part; and the original structure to that extent was destroyed during the war.¹ For fifty years afterwards, the stump of the tower, scarcely visible above the roof of the church, remained a monument of a troublous

¹ There is a tradition that the original tower was a stage higher than the present one, which, considering the proportions of the structure, is not unlikely to be well founded.

time. Over the doorway of the south porch of the church, there is a stone tablet with the following inscription referring to the re-construction of the tower:—

The Tower of this Parish being
by force of Arms pul'd
down in y^e late unhappy
Civel Wars Anno Dom 1646
was Rebuilt 1696.

W^m Downe Esq^r.
Christo^r Lethbridge Gen^l.
John Avery.
John Rogers.
W^m Langdon.
George Lee.
Church-Wardens.
Rob^t Nutting M^r Builder.

Upon this record Gribble, the author of the *Memorials of Barnstaple*, makes the following comment—puerile, I cannot help thinking, as it stands, but still more so in the light which it is now possible to throw upon the circumstances—"The idea of a massive and lofty stone tower having been *pulled* down as above expressed, is quite ludicrous, especially as the party to whom the act has always been (and no doubt justly) attributed, had a powerful battery at their command, by which they could, without any laborious exertion, accomplish their mischievous purpose. Why this church was so much injured does not appear, but it requires no great stretch of fancy to imagine Fairfax's soldiery,

in the sheer wantonness of power, and without any particular motive, levelling their artillery at the tower, merely because it happened to stand a conspicuous mark within range of their shot."

Dr. Oliver follows Gribble. His bias naturally leaning to this suggestion of Puritan malignity, that accomplished antiquary with a singular want of caution states, *as a fact*, that the tower and church were wantonly cannonaded by Fairfax's soldiery.¹

In the same note from which I have quoted, Gribble further says: "A great part of the body of the church was also destroyed, but has never been replaced; portions of the walls still remain at nearly their original height." This extraordinary statement is unintelligible. Taken literally, it would mean that at the time when Gribble wrote the church was a ruin—which certainly a few persons now living might be able to dispute from actual personal knowledge. There is, in short, no evidence whatever that the "body of the church" was injured.² What misled Gribble, probably, were the remains of the conventual buildings attached to the church, which were partially destroyed at the time of the suppression of the monasteries.

In the preceding page of the *Memorials*, Gribble,

¹ *Ecclesiastical Antiquities in Devon*, iii. 36.

² Part of the roof of the chancel, however, had been broken down, or its woodwork had fallen into decay, and it seems to have been replaced when the tower was rebuilt. By an uncommon arrangement the north wall of the chancel is formed for part of its length by the tower itself. The tower, in fact, is much older than the parish church which it now serves, and stood at the west end of the original Priory church long since destroyed.

in an imperfect, not to say absurd, account of the Great Fort, hazards the conjecture that "it was, without doubt, from this spot that the church at Pilton was cannonaded."¹ The finding of a cannon-ball in the churchyard of Pilton some years ago was of course, popularly, a confirmation of the tradition even to a detail.

Now the distance of the tower from the Great Fort, measured on the ordnance map, is nearly seven furlongs—say, 1,500 yards. The longest point blank range (*i.e.*, at which a shot would be likely to strike with any battering effect) of any gun of the period, as given in Captain Smith's table,² was that of the demi-culverin or nine-pounder, and that was thirty-nine score paces, which, giving a pace the liberal allowance of a yard in length, are equal to about 780 yards, or only a little more than half the distance from the fort to the tower. The physical objection to the story seems conclusive. There are not wanting what I may call moral improbabilities also. To anticipate a little—the Great Fort was, as a matter of fact, the last position surrendered by the Royalist garrison of Barnstaple. It is implied by the tradition that the guns of the fort were then, when everything was in the hands of the Parliamentarians, turned upon the inoffensive and undemonstrative tower! I do not think that this was characteristic of the temper of Fairfax's troops, and it was as far as possible

¹ *Memorials*, pp. 460, 461.

² *The Accidence*, &c., by Captain John Smith. Works by Arber, p. 801.

from what we know of the practice of their eminent commander. He, however, was not present.

A different tradition relating to the demolition of the tower more probably contains, although in a misty and distorted form, the elements of the truth; for the communication of it to me I have been indebted to Mr. Townshend M. Hall, F.G.S., whose profound interest in everything appertaining to the parochial history of Pilton is well known. It is, that the tower was pulled down—presumably by the garrison of Barnstaple—to get rid of the annoyance which the town suffered from a battery mounted upon it. It was not at all an uncommon practice to place guns, the small four or five-pounders of the period, in such a position.

The fate of the church bells of Pilton is inseparable from that of the stage of the tower in which they were of course hung, and is of collateral interest. We know that according to an Inventory, taken in the year 1553, Pilton had at that time five bells.¹ In the year 1712, sixteen years after the tower had been restored, six new bells were cast by Abraham Rudhall of Gloucester, and hung. The original set of five had therefore disappeared at some intermediate time. Mr. Hall, referring to these, informs me that where “the old monastic bells went, no one knows.”

I believe that I shall be able to throw some interesting light upon the actual facts. The authors of the inscription on the church porch of Pilton doubtless knew what they were inditing. “Quite

¹ “Church Bells of Devon,” by the Rev. H. T. Ellacombe, *Trans. Exeter Dioc. Arch. Society*, 2nd Series, i.

ludicrous," as the idea was to Mr. Gribble, the tower was, it appears, literally *pulled* down—not, however, he would have been perhaps disappointed to learn, by the playful Roundheads, but by the Cavaliers, and some time before the first of Fairfax's soldiers had come within sight of the garrison of Barnstaple.

Among the Clarendon MSS. in the Bodleian Library there is an original letter, written from Barnstaple, by Sir Allen Apsley to Sir Edward Hyde, then at Truro, dated the 20th of December, 1645. It is probably a portion, only, of a correspondence which had been kept up between them since their meeting at Barnstaple in the preceding June. Sir Allen alludes to his brother James Apsley having been sent by him into Cornwall—to Bodmin it appears—and that he had executed some commission relating to *the bells*. There was a family of noted bell-founders of the name of Pennington at Bodmin in the seventeenth century. But Sir Allen had occasion for their services to cast, not bells, but something better suited for his present purpose. The bells to which he referred were evidently destined to be converted into cannon or mortar-pieces; for he goes on to say that he need not much trouble himself to send into France for mortar-pieces, as the guns which he has (or will then have?) will be sufficient for the defence of the town. With apparently some qualms of conscience he then says that "the bells" should remain still in their places, but that he is forced to *pull down the steeple*. The "steeple" could have been none other than that of Pilton. Although the word steeple, in Devonshire, popularly means a spire, it is well known

that in the common language of most parts of England in the seventeenth century a tower, with or without a spire surmounting it, was a steeple. I believe no other tower in North Devon was taken down or destroyed in the time of the Civil War; and this was almost the only one which can be said to have been within the reach of the garrison. The demolition of the tower and the appropriation of the bells must have taken place soon after this letter was written—probably, in agreement with the date stated in the inscription on the church porch, in January, or very early in the year, 1646. What Sir Allen's motive was in taking down the tower is not so obvious, and can only be conjectured. As already surmised, the building was beyond the line of his legitimate defences. The most probable supposition is that, in the expectation of being besieged, he thought it prudent to deprive the enemy of the opportunity of planting artillery on the elevated position (then so much approved by artillerists) which the tower offered, and from thence of attacking the Castle Works, which would have been within range.

As there are other matters in this interesting document which relate to the present subject, I shall here print it entire:—

BARNESTAPLE 20 *Decem.* 1645.

SIR

you haue in two Lres commended my brother for an excellent solicitor, I am sure the last time he was in Cornwall, he did very litle of the businesse I sent him for, except that of the bells, w^{ch} should remaine still in their places, but

that I am forced to pull downe the steeple, for I need not much trouble my selfe to send into ffraunce for mortar peices, theis Gunnes I haue will defend mee, as long as the Cornish will doe you. I thought I should haue receaued a certaine assurance from you, of twenty thousand french to be here precisely by the first of March, and by the same time as many Irish on the other side if the peace had been concluded, if not, my Lord of Ormond and his Army, and deferred the conquering of that foolish Nation till wee had more leisure, with theis forty thousand men might haue made an End of the Warrs and haue confounded all theis Rebels, w^{ch} I beleive is more then the Cornish can bring to passe against the Parliament, for soe the King now calls them, as you may pceave by this inclosed Mem^d sent mee yesterday from their Army ; you haue made my brother madd with the thought of gaine he is to haue att sea, and is nowe very earnest with mee to write to you to pcure a Warrant from the Prince to give him authority to seize vpon any ship fitt for his purpose, and a Licence to robb att Sea, w^{ch} would be very necessary they haueing now stopped all our ships in Wales, soe that wee shalbe shortly vndonne for want of coales did not Sir Samuell Rolles his woods growe so neere vs, Sir I haue almost lost my thumb by the locke of a fowleing peice but I hope my naile will excuse it, and though I cannot write my selfe you shall not want theis importunities from

your most humble

servant

A. APSLEY.¹

For the right honorable Sir
Edward Hyde Chancellor
of the Exchequer.

The allusion to the external aid which the Royalists

¹ *Clarendon State Papers*, Bodleian Library, No. 2052.

at this time were buoying themselves up with the hope of obtaining, will be understood by students of the general history of the Civil War. The King was calculating upon the accession to his forces of 20,000 of the Irish rebels, as the result of the famous treaty made with them by the Earl of Glamorgan,¹ and was hoping to obtain shipping from Holland to bring them over. Lord Jermyn, who was with Queen Henrietta Maria in France, had held out hopes of raising a French force of 5,000 men, which the King so far reckoned upon that he designed its landing in Kent, where he proposed to join it, and fixed the marching route afterwards; and Lord Goring was reported to have promised to send 6,000 "captive Spaniards" from France to reinforce the Prince's army in the West.

"My brother" was James Apsley, who has already been mentioned in a previous page as obnoxious to the worthy Corporation of Barnstaple. Perhaps he had been bred a sailor; at all events, he had the nautical proclivities and the taste for adventure which are implied by Sir Allen's candid reference to his ardour and to the sort of employment which he coveted. James Apsley was apparently a *vaurien*. If this reference shows him pretty much in the character of a filibuster, in his later career he figures as a desperado, making a ruffianly attempt to murder St. John, the Parliamentary Ambassador in Holland.

The glimpses that are obtained of the internal

¹ For an elaborate exposition of this obscure transaction see article in the *English Historical Review*, No. 8, October, 1887, by Dr. S. R. Gardiner,

condition of Barnstaple during the latter months of the year 1645, are of much interest. In October, the county of Glamorgan had declared for the Parliament; a Parliamentary squadron was in possession of the Bristol Channel. The ordinary coal supply was therefore cut off, and the inhabitants, in an early and exceptionally severe winter, were in danger of suffering from want of fuel. It is not quite certain where the woods of Sir Samuel Rolle—who, being a Parliamentarian, and one of the traitors proclaimed by the King, was doubtless considered by the Governor of the garrison a fair subject for spoliation—were situated. It has been suggested to me, on the best authority, that the estate of Pottington, still part of the possessions of the Rolle family, within half a mile of the town, and easily accessible from it by land or water, may, at that time, have been covered wholly or partly with wood. Although I confess that this does not seem to me to fix unimpeachably the precise locality of "Sir Samuel Rolles his woods," it is the best suggestion that I have been able to obtain. Further information, which might have thrown other light upon the point, has been, for some reason, withheld.

Following up his brother's application on his behalf, James Apsley himself wrote on the same day to Sir Edward Hyde, then at Truro, a letter, also preserved in the Bodleian Library, which I here insert :—

Decem. 20. 1645.

DEARE S^r

When I was last at Bodman you weare pleased to

tell me that if I woulde you woulde procure mee a commission for the settinge out my shippe as a man of warre upon these coastes. I durst then desier nothinge beinge utterly unacquainted wth these seas, but havinge since convers^t wth the masters and shippe-carpenters they all putt mee in greate hopes that if I canne gett my shippe and two frigggotts to attende her I may easily intercept many of the Bristow marchants, therefore S^r if yⁿ shall thinke fittinge I may have a commission for the settinge forth what shippinge I have or canne gett as men of warre in the kinges service wth power to make prize of all such marchant men and others as belonge to any of the rebells harbours, and if alsoe yⁿ please to thinke it convenient that I may have a warrant for the pressinge of some friggot either here or at Dartmouth that are not already in his ma^{ty}s service (for the attending of this greate shippe) I payinge any marchionable rates for her, or freightinge her accordinge to the kinges rates, I shall give order for my shippe speedily to be brought about, and my coale to be converted into such a friggot or little shippe as may be most convenient for our present necessitys, the reason that makes me trouble yⁿ in this businesse is because the rogues at Swansy have stopped all our coale barques, and to have liberty of beinge revenged on such raskells though it bee the most pleasingest thinge canne happen to mee yett the expectation of such prizes as may bee beneficiall to his highnesse makes this so much desired by

Deare S^r

Y^r most humble servant

J. APSLEY.¹

ffor the right hon^{ble}

S^r Edwarde Hide

Chacellor of

the Excheq^r.

Whether or not the Prince gave the coveted com-

¹ *Clarendon State Papers*, Bodleian Library, No. 2051.

mission is unknown and unimportant ; there was but a brief time left, at all events, in which it could possibly be acted upon. I think it may be inferred from a passage in the letter that Apsley's ship was at that time lying in Dartmouth Harbour ; and he speaks of having her "brought about," in the way which the relative geographical positions of the two ports would naturally suggest.

In the face of these indications of the activity of the Governor of the garrison of Barnstaple in perfecting his defences, and of his confidence, somewhat qualified as it may be, in his ability to hold the town, it is strange to find such an item of intelligence as the following. It has been copied, but without any reference to its source, and inserted with some other "Antiquarian Notes" in the *North Devon Journal* ;¹ but I have traced it to the *Moderate Intelligencer*, a Parliamentary news-sheet of February 12-18, 1646,² and I give it here chiefly as an example of the untrustworthy character of much of the news circulating at that time :—

Barnstaple works are so fallen down that the Guns many of them are in the Ditches, and cannot be repaired untill Spring ; not above 500 in the Town and Castle.

If this was really the condition of the fortress which soon afterwards defied for more than two months some of the ablest of the Parliamentary commanders, the circumstance considerably enlarges our estimate

¹ In December, 1881 ; contributed by "C. C."

² King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxlvii.

of the personal heroism of the defenders of Barnstaple during the last weeks of the Royalist occupation. But the statement is entirely uncorroborated, and is so inconsistent with what is otherwise known, that I do not hesitate to dismiss it as a weak invention of the enemy. The Governor's measures of defence, on the contrary, show anything but the laxity implied. One of his acts, of which all local tradition has been long lost, was at this time to break down one or more of the arches of the bridge across the Taw at Barnstaple, cutting off at will the communication from the opposite bank of the river. The fact is mentioned by several contemporary newswriters.¹ The restoration of the fabric after the war is briefly set down as "the Repaire of our Bridge" in the last miscellaneous item of the Summary. There is no precise account of the numerical strength of the garrison during this period; but Lord Clarendon, who had the best means of knowing, states that 500 men had been promised by the Governor towards the force proposed for the relief of Exeter, and we have other accounts of 500 Foot having been actually detached from the garrison on a special expedition presently to be mentioned; it is also evident that there must have been, over and above that number, a sufficient margin for the security of the town. From 800 to 1,000 may be taken therefore as the probable strength of the

¹ *The Copie of another Letter, &c.*, from W. C. [William Clarke], King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxliii. *The Kingdom's Weekly Intelligencer*, Jan. 27-Feb. 3, 1646, *ibid.*, vol. ccxliv. *Perfect Occurrences of Parliament*, No. 6, week ending Feb. 6, 1646, *ibid.* vol. ccxliv.

garrison, and this was composed of both Horse and Foot.¹

The meagre accounts that I have been able to give of the affairs of Barnstaple during the latter months of the year 1645 leave, I am aware, much to be desired. The local records are with reference to this period an absolute blank. The Parliamentary news-writers had little to report of the internal affairs of a fortified town, held by the enemy, and from which no communication was likely to come out to them. What they did report is to be cautiously accepted. For the reason also that the garrison was now cut off from the centre of Royalist information which still existed at Oxford, no mention of Barnstaple and its fortunes is to be found in the pages of the *Mercurius Aulicus* or other emanations from the press in the university city.

I must now revert to the proceedings of Sir Thomas Fairfax's army, in order to show in their due sequence the events with which the fate of Barnstaple, as it turned out, was so intimately connected.

In the beginning of January, 1646, the relative positions of the two armies, it will be remembered, were broadly these: The main body of Fairfax's forces was at Tiverton, with detached garrisons

¹ It would seem that Barnstaple was still a recognized magazine of arms. One of the reports published at about this time is:—"From Barnstaple they have sent all the spare arms they have to Launson to arm the Cornish"—*i.e.*, for the Prince's service. (*Moderate Intelligence*, Jan. 1-8, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxxxix.)

holding posts on both sides of the Exe. The Royalist army was now grouped in two divisions separated by Dartmoor; the one, principally of Horse, occupying the country between the Dart and the Teign; the other, consisting of both Horse and Foot, lying partly at and about Okehampton and partly at Tavistock, where Prince Charles himself was collecting all the loose contributions of men, money, and supplies which could be obtained from the country in his rear. During the latter half of the month of December the central portion of North Devon had been practically at the mercy of the Royalist Horse. They had "guards" at Newnham Bridge and Kesham Bridge on the river Taw; and the villages of Roborough, Ashreigney, Burrington, Atherington, and High Bickington were occupied by the troopers. Not only were the soldiers living at free quarter, but by equally summary exactions they extorted money and supplies from the whole district within their power. "They demand," says one who writes from the spot, "200*l.* of Moulton [South Molton] to be paid to the Garrison of Barnstable as this day, besides great store of provisions both to that place and the Army."¹ The following extract is from one of the peremptory warrants of Colonel Charles Fowkes, issued Dec. 28, to the High Constables of the Hundred of Witheridge, for the immediate raising of one month's contribution for the use of the Army; it illustrates the method:—

¹ *Moderate Intelligencer*, No. 42, Dec. 18–25, 1645, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxxxvii.

I can give your Constables but three dayes time after the date hereof for the raying of the money, and whosoever I shall find negligent in the service or unwilling to pay his rate, I shall severely punish him, or she [*sic*], and leave them to the mercy of the common souldiers.¹

On Thursday, the 8th of January, the Parliamentary army moved out of Tiverton, where its head-quarters had been for more than a month, and marched as far as Crediton. At the same time, Colonel Sir Hardress Waller,² who had been previously occupying Crediton, advanced with two regiments of Foot and executed a feint towards Okehampton. At Bow he came into collision with a cavalry outpost of the Royalists' which he defeated, after a sharp engagement, taking sixty prisoners.

On the same day, a detachment of the Plymouth regiment of Horse³ was sent apparently to make a reconnaissance farther West, and "near Barnstaple" succeeded in beating up the quarters of a party of Sir Allen Apsley's Horse. This party seems to have been posted at New Bridge⁴ the lowest available

¹ *Perfect Passages*, &c., No. 63. Dec. 31 [1645]–Jan. 6, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxxxviii.

² He was a cousin of the more eminent Sir William Waller. Afterwards, one of the regicides.

³ The Plymouth regiment, perhaps originally raised in South Devon, had no connection at this particular time with the town of Plymouth, as from its designation might be supposed. Its Colonel was Sir Francis Drake, the second baronet, grand-nephew of the Admiral. It belonged to Sir William Waller's old army, and was part of the surplus forces drafted off for service in the West under Sir Thomas Fairfax when the new model army was organized in the spring of 1645. (See Sprigge's preliminary account of the state of the kingdom in his *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, also ed. 1854, p. xiii.)

⁴ There are the foundations of two previous New Bridges visible in

passage of the river Taw, now that the bridge at Barnstaple had been broken down. Sprigge makes no mention of this affair in the body of his work, but it occurs in the "Table of the Motion and Action of the Army," &c., appended at the end. The result is there stated to have been that 80 prisoners with their horses, 100 arms, and two colours were taken from Sir Allen Apsley's party. Another account which I have recovered gives some additional details, and differs in the number of prisoners taken:—

A party of horse of about 70 of Sir Francis Drake's Regiment, a Phoenix sprung out of the ashes of that myrrour of his time, old Sir Francis Drake, and as zealous a lover of his Nation, who pursues the steps of honour by Land for his Countries good as his predecessor did by Sea; this party of horse commanded by Col. Chuffin: The same party of horse at Tauten [Bishop's Tawton] near Barnstable took 80 horse, 2 Colours, 1 Captaine, 1 Lieutenant, 26 Troopers, with much Baggage, without the losse of a man; this so alarm'd Barnstable, that they were possest that more forces were comming to storm them suddenly, which caused some of the enemies forces from about Dartmouth to draw to the securing of that Town.¹

This extract is of considerable interest, irrespectively of its present connection. Allusions to our great Devonian, the Elizabethan hero, Francis Drake, are not common in the literature of the seventeenth century.

the bed of the river lower down the stream, a short distance from the present structure (which is modern). The writer remembers seeing them often in old pleasant boating days on the Taw.

¹ *The Kingdom's Weekly Intelligencer*, No. 136, Jan. 20-27, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxliii.

It would appear that in consequence of the loss sustained in this outpost affair, the garrison of Barnstaple was reinforced ; but I have not found any confirmation of the statement to that effect.

A brief description of the ensuing operations of the Parliamentary army in South Devon is necessary, in order to show how it came to pass that the forces of Prince Charles were compelled to change front and fall back upon North Devon.

On the 9th of January, the main body of Fairfax's army resumed its advance in the direction of Moreton Hampstead, a brigade of Horse and Foot, under the command of Lieutenant-General Oliver Cromwell, being detached in advance, on the left, towards Bovey Tracey, which the scouts had reported to be occupied by a strong party of the enemy's Horse. After the early darkness of the January evening had set in, Cromwell surprised and fell upon this detachment, part of Lord Wentworth's brigade, in the little town, capturing between three and four hundred horses, which were in the stables, and several colours. A few of the Royalist soldiers were killed and others were taken prisoners ; but most of them escaped on foot in the direction of Ashburton, taking refuge for a time in Ilsington church, which had been previously fortified, only to be speedily dislodged. Meanwhile, Fairfax with the remainder of his forces had reached Moreton Hampstead. By reason of the frozen snow which covered the ground, part of the train of ammunition carriages could be got no farther than Great Fulford. On the following day, the 10th, in " extreme bitter cold " weather, as

Spigge remarks, the whole army rendezvoused on Bovey Heathfield, and then marched to Ashburton, from which the remainder of Wentworth's Brigade was beaten out, and his Horse, which it took little to demoralize, retreated in great confusion towards Tavistock, communicating panic on the way to Sir John Digby's force then blockading Plymouth.

The seaport town of Dartmouth was at that time held by a strong Royalist garrison, the Governor of which was Sir Hugh Pollard, who had taken so prominent a part in the transactions of the earlier period of the war in North Devon. The defences of Dartmouth had been considerably strengthened and increased after the capture of the place by Prince Maurice in October, 1643, since which time it had remained in the possession of the Royalists. A large detached earth-work on the height of Gallantry Bower, and another smaller one on that of Kingswear, with the mediæval castles at the entrance of the harbour, commanded the roadstead. Around Townstal church and on Mount Boon were other works covering the landward side of the town, which was otherwise defended by a circuit of breastwork. Altogether these fortifications mounted at least a hundred guns, and were held by upwards of a thousand men.

Dartmouth, deprived of the support of an army in the field, invited attack ; and as a strategic position, opening communication with the sea, it was an object of the Parliamentarians to obtain possession of it. Although it was impossible from the state of

the roads to bring up any artillery, Fairfax, on the 11th of January, summoned the garrison and reconnoitred the defences. A few days were given to the necessary preparations, and to enable Captain Batten, with a squadron of the Parliamentary ships in the Channel, to co-operate. In the night of Sunday, the 18th, after, as usual, Mr. Hugh Peters had in a vigorous and trenchant discourse "exhorted the soldiers to their duty," Dartmouth was stormed. Some men belonging to the town, who knew the weak places in the defences, had been brought up from Plymouth to direct the storming parties. The town seems to have been carried by a rush with scarcely any loss to the assailants. It does not appear that the ships made any attempt upon the seaward forts, but two hundred sailors were landed and took part in the assault. Sir Henry Cary, who occupied Kingswear Fort, obtained favourable conditions on surrender, and was allowed to march away with his regiment.¹ Sir Hugh Pollard, who was wounded whilst in a boat in the harbour, still held Dartmouth Castle and Gallantry Bower, but on the following day capitulated, and for the second, if not third, time became a prisoner to the Parliament.² Two men-of-war lying in the harbour were captured. One of these, of 200 tons burthen and carrying 12 guns, is stated to have belonged to the Governor of

¹ Sir Henry Cary, of Cockington. In Vivian's pedigree of the Cary family he is stated to have "alienated Cockington in his zeal for Royalty."

² He survived the Restoration, and became Comptroller of the Household to Charles II.

Barnstaple. This was undoubtedly James Apsley's ship, which, as we have seen, not a month before, he was intending to bring round. The schemes of this enterprising young Cavalier were therefore nipped in the bud, and his man-of-war passes out of history.

After this success, which Sir Thomas Fairfax, in his dispatch to the House of Lords, described with the peculiar Puritanical fervour now so difficult to understand—and he was not an extreme Puritan—as “a sweet mercy of God,” the army returned to Totnes.¹

Sprigge mentions that at Totnes a “consultation was held about Barnstable,” from which it would appear that the reduction of the stronghold in North Devon was already considered strategically desirable; but the immediate resolution taken by Sir Thomas Fairfax was the resumption of the siege of Exeter. On Monday, the 25th of January, in pursuance of this resolution, the army was marched to Chudleigh, where for the next fortnight the General established his head-quarters. Powderham Castle had surrendered to Colonel Hammond, the Parliamentary officer, on the 24th.

Exeter was summoned on the 27th of January, and some parleying took place; but Sir John Berkeley,

¹ There came in here, in answer to Fairfax's warrants, about three thousand men, out of whom a regiment of volunteers was raised and incorporated with the Parliamentary army (Sprigge's *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 176, ed. 1854, p. 185). Its Colonel, Fowel, afterwards succeeded his father as Sir John Fowel, Bart., of Fowelscombe, Ugborough. He married a daughter of Sir John Chichester, of Hall.

the Governor of the garrison, having been promised early relief by Prince Charles, held out no prospect of his surrendering. Preparations were therefore ordered by Fairfax for an assault. While these were in progress, however, the work was arrested by disquieting news from North Devon of a movement of the Prince's army towards Barnstaple and, simultaneously, from Dorsetshire, of another body of Royalist Horse advancing from Oxford, and it was of the utmost importance that their junction with each other should be prevented. Upon this intelligence, Fairfax detached Colonel Cook with three regiments of Horse of Massey's Brigade to watch the enemy in North Devon; but, a few days later, this detachment was recalled and sent in the opposite direction to check the threatened approach of the Oxford Horse, which however turned out to be little more than a scare. While this marching and countermarching was going on, the Royalist forces were spreading over North Devon, and to their transactions there it will be convenient again to turn.

The well-known work of Joshua Sprigge is professedly the history "of the Motions, Actions, and Successes of the Army under the immediate conduct of his Excellency Sir Thomas Fairfax, Kt." So far, the author, who accompanied the army, is an invaluable guide to the history of this campaign. By an equally favourable chance a more famous historian was taking notes at the same time in the opposite camp. It is now desirable to glean from the pages

of Lord Clarendon what was the state of preparedness of the Prince of Wales's army in the present altered circumstances.

Lord Wentworth's Horse and Foot, retiring in the greatest disorder after the shocks that they had received at Bovey and Ashburton, made their way by the southern skirts of Dartmoor to Tavistock, at that time Prince Charles's head-quarters. The probability, which soon became a certainty, that Totnes was already in the possession of Fairfax, and the hopelessness of any attempt to recover the lost ground, finally disposed of the plan of an advance in that direction. So grave was the position considered, that Tavistock was not thought to be safe quarters for the Prince, and he was advised to retreat to Launceston, whither consequently he withdrew with the Foot, many of whom, being Cornishmen, were already deserting. The whole of the Royalist Horse remained on the Devonshire side of the Tamar, their quarters extending to Holsworthy and Okehampton. With regard to the persistent jealousies among the commanders, Lord Clarendon sarcastically remarks that "there were now drawn together in one action against the enemy" the separate forces of Wentworth, Grenville, and Digby, not one of whom acknowledged the superiority of either of the others. As for the subordinate ranks, his disclosure, if candid, is perhaps attributable to a certain bitterness with which he afterwards reviewed this exacerbating crisis in the affairs of his party; it was, he says, "a dissolute, undisciplined, wicked, beaten army; . . . both officer and soldier were desirous to take any

occasion and to find any excuse to lay down their arms."¹ This was probably true enough, and it illustrates the temper which characterized the subsequent proceedings of the demoralized parties of Royalist Horse which, until the middle of February, pervaded North Devon, harassing the already much-distracted people by their exactions and rapine. Their erratic movements are to be traced, not without considerable difficulty, by the aid of the contemporary intelligencers.

On Sunday, the 11th of January, there had been a rendezvous of the Prince's Horse appointed at Bradbury Castle, a prehistoric earth-work between Okehampton and Holsworthy, from which is obtained a magnificent view over the greater part of North Devon reaching to the blue hills of Exmoor in the distance. There, the more devoted of the Cavaliers might well have thought now lay the path of honour and loyalty—the way to the King! Some of this party pushed forward to Torrington, where, on the 15th, there were "neare one thousand Horse . . . with billets to quarter thereabouts, but they returned back westward to Monkleigh, Bradworthy, Sutcombe and parishes adjoining."² Some of those left behind in Torrington seem to have been a mere rabble, as they were cleared out of the town by the Mayor with the assistance of some half-score musketeers sent to him for the purpose by Captain Chester, one of Sir Allen

¹ *History of the Rebellion*, p. 619 b.

² *A Continuation of Certain Speciall and Remarkable Passages, &c.*, No. 19, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxliii.

Apsley's officers apparently quartered with a Foot company at Bideford.¹

On the 16th, the remainder of Wentworth's Horse (still occasionally called "Goring's" in the contemporary accounts), which had effected a disorderly retreat after the affair at Ashburton on the 10th, came up and occupied Holsworthy. These were the brigades of Lords Cleveland and Colepepper and what was left of Lord Wentworth's own brigade. They established themselves in the neighbouring villages, posting strong guards at "High Bainton, Goulden Inn, Waggoner Bridge and Higher Gosh"—places which possibly may be still identified.² In these quarters they remained for a week or more, eating up the produce of the district and committing the greatest excesses. "The Towne of Holsworthy," says one correspondent, "is almost ruined by their plunder, quarter, and fiering their Household-stuffe."³ Another says "they have murthered five Country men in their houses."⁴ The latter piece of intelligence may have been an exaggeration. However, the license which ensued was sufficiently exasperating to call up another apparition of Clubmen, who, in this remote district, from the parishes of Hartland, Woolfardisworthy, Parkham, Clovelly, Morwenstow, and Kilkhampton, to the number of 700, it is stated,

¹ *Perfect Occurrences*, &c., week ending January 30, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxliii.

² *Perfect Passages*, &c., Jan. 21-27, 1646, *ibid.* "High Bainton" is of course High Heanton, now by Post-official authority "Highampton."

³ *The Copie of another Letter*, &c., King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxliii.

⁴ *The Moderate Intelligencer*, No. 47, Jan. 22-29, 1646, *ibid.*

were in armed resistance, encouraged thereto by Colonel Cary (of Clovelly), a Cavalier.¹

"They say they must break through to the King whatsoever hazard they run," is the report more than once made by the Parliamentary scouts. By the end of the month of January, Cleveland's brigade had moved farther east.² Its advanced guard of a hundred Horse was holding Hansford Bridge, over which the road from Burrington to Chulmleigh crossed the Taw, and were demanding from the latter town a contribution of ten pounds a day, one half in money and the other half in provisions. A party of Barnstaple Horse was on guard at Brightley (*i.e.*, UMBERLEIGH) Bridge, a few miles lower down the stream—"The country people in those parts do make grievous complaints of the enemies souldiers' cruelties."³ Colonel Fookes (or Fowkes), already mentioned, lay with three hundred Horse at Brightley (Colonel Gifford's house). He had extracted £200 from Chulmleigh. The head-quarters were at "the Lord of Bathes house at

¹ *Perfect Occurrences*, No 5, week ending 30 Jan. 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxliii. It may have been at this time that a son of Sir Peter Osborne, of Chicksands, Bart., was mortally wounded—"killed at Hartland in some skirmish of which no trace remains"—mentioned in the memoir prefixed to the charming letters of his sister Dorothy recently published. The young soldier seems to have found a friend in Nicholas Monk, the rector of Kilkhampston and brother of the more famous George Monk, afterwards Duke of Albemarle (*Letters from Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple*, 1652-54. Edited by Edward Abbot Parry).

² "Captayne James Linge" was buried January 30 at Buckland Brewer—Parish Register. (For this I am indebted to the Rev. J. Ingle Dredge.)

³ *The Kingdom's Weekly Intelligencer*, No. 137, Jan. 27-Feb. 3, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxliv.

N. Tavestock"—one of the metamorphoses to which the word Tawstock has been subjected.¹

On the 1st of February, a party of Sir Francis Drake's Plymouth regiment, which seems to have been still on outpost duty in the neighbourhood, under the command of Major Stephens, fell upon the Royalist Horse at Burrington, taking an officer and all the troopers, variously stated as from twenty to forty in number, prisoners.² The indefatigable correspondent who signed himself "W. C.", which stood for William Clarke, one of the two clerks of Mr. John Rushworth, Secretary to Sir Thomas Fairfax, writing from the Parliamentary head-quarters at Chudleigh on the following day, sends in addition to an account of the skirmish, further particulars which are of some interest to us:—

I found the West country indeed craggy, and the people and entertainment for the most part crabbed . . . this morning we have certain Advertisement that they plundered in Chimleigh yesterday the worth of Five hundred pounds, and returned to their quarters, there were not above three or four hundred of them, and they were gone by the morning. Barstaple horse have contracted their Quarters into Newport neer the Town, having left Tauton their former Quarters; for Goring's horse have advanced their Quarters East as far as Brauton [? Bratton Fleming] and Bray; they returned yesterday morning into North-Tavestock, Alscho,

¹ *Mercurius Civicus*, No. 141, Jan. 29-Feb. 4, 1644, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxlv.

² Sprigge's *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 181, ed. 1854, p. 189. *The Kingdom's Weekly Intelligencer*, No. 138, Feb. 3-10, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxlv.

and keep a Guard at Newbridge over the River Tau, three miles on this side Barstaple, they have also placed a Guard at Winckley Beacon, and they were (as this day) to receive at Sunbridge [Swimbridge] and the parishes adjoining, six weeks pay, and afterwards the proportion of a weeks pay every day. . . ."¹

Chidley, Feb. 2. 1645 [*i.e.*, 1646].

Some of these movements were probably mere foraging expeditions. The Royalist troopers paid for nothing and consequently had to go farther and farther for supplies, and the country which had been swept by Goring in September and October was not likely to have much left for the next comers.

The settlement of the various questions arising out of the jealousies and personal rivalries of the Royalist commanders was a difficult task which fell upon the Prince of Wales's Council at Launceston. It was finally in this wise: Lord Hopton, himself one of the Council, the high-minded, disinterested, and irreproachable Cavalier, who had already done great, if not always brilliant, service in the royal cause, was induced to take the command in chief of the Prince's army. By the Prince's orders, Lord Wentworth was to command the Horse, Sir Richard Grenville all the Foot, and Lord Capel the Prince's Guards, all under Lord Hopton. Even this arrangement was not felicitous. Wentworth demurred, but ultimately yielded. Grenville refused to act as subordinate to any one, and was in consequence put

¹ *Sir Thomas Fairfax's Proceedings, &c.* . . . *The Prince's Horse forced back towards Barnstable, &c.*, London: Printed for Matthew Walbank, Feb. 9, 1645 [1646], King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxlv.

under arrest in Launceston Castle; a proceeding which Lord Clarendon thought it necessary to justify at large in his *History of the Rebellion*.

As Sir Richard Grenville, than whom there was no more remarkable character of the period, in Devonshire, disappears at this point from the scene of his various misdeeds, I may here in a few words complete his story. According to his own account,¹ a warrant was actually signed for consigning him as a prisoner to Barnstaple; but as the course of events rendered this impracticable, his destination was altered to St. Michael's Mount, from whence he was shortly afterwards allowed to convey himself to the Continent. Sir Edward Hyde, writing in his retirement at Jersey to Sir Edward Nicholas, a few months afterwards, commented on the incident of Grenville's arrest as follows:—"For the imprysoning of S^r Richard Grenville (who is most unworthy of y^e reputa^on he had) we were absolutely neccessitated to it. . . . We had no reason to believe his interest in y^e county soe great; neither in truth was it; but y^e geñall indisposi^on w^{ch} at y^e time possessed men was very apparent, when those very men who complayned against him and seemed to despise him, tooke occasion to grumble at his removall."² The observation at the close will not surprise any one who has lived long enough to have experienced this peculiar form of the perversity of human nature. Sir Richard Grenville was so odious to the Parlia-

¹ "Sir Richard Grenville's Narrative of the Proceedings of his Majesty's affairs in the West of England," &c., Carte's *Letters*, i. 96.

² Clarendon MSS. Printed in Lister's *Life of Clarendon*, iii. 38.

ment that he was afterwards expressly named as one of the seven proposed to be excluded from pardon in the treaty at Newport ; and, under the Protectorate, in a secret article of a treaty with France for the mutual exclusion from the two countries of certain obnoxious persons, he was one of twenty so indicated. He died in exile in the year 1658. " He lies buried in a church at Ghent, with this inscription only upon a plain stone :—

SIR RICHARD GRANVILLE,
The King's General in the West." ¹

In all his campaigns, whether in garrison or in the field, King Charles had never intermitted the observance of the offices of the Church of England and respect for its hierarchy. The Council of the Prince of Wales, even under the stress of the circumstances which now involved them, appear to have religiously followed the illustrious example. The following missive, sent at this time to the Vicar of Okehampton, has survived :—

¹ " A Vindication of Sir Richard Granville, General in the West for King Charles the First, from the Misrepresentations of the Earl of Clarendon, and the reverend Mr. Archdeacon Echard " in *The Genuine Works in Verse and Prose of the Right Honourable George Granville Lord Lansdowne*, London, 1732. Lord Lansdowne, who was Sir Richard Grenville's grand-nephew, is responsible for the change in the mode of spelling the family name. The inscription was obviously written by Lord Lansdowne himself. The church in which the monumental stone was placed has not been identified, and I have been informed by a correspondent at Ghent that nothing is now known of it there. It was Lord Lansdowne who erected the sumptuous monument in Kilkhampton church to his grandfather, Sir Bevill Grenville, and also the memorial on the battle-field of Stratton, to the inscription on which I have already adverted.

After our hearty comendacons Whereas we shall allwayes endeavor and shall esteeme it y^e greatest ornament and support of our Court and Campe to have about Us y^e most Vertuous and able men of all Professions and Con-dicons, but especially of Divines, by whose good examples and preaching y^e rest may be reformed and made better. These are therefore (being informed that you are a Grave, Learned, and Orthodoxe Divine) to desire & require you for y^e purpose aforesaid to give yo^r attendance upon Vs for some tyme, after which we shall dismisse you to yo^r other occasions. And so we bid yo^u heartily Farewell. Given at Our Court at Lanceston y^e 1st of February, 1645 [*i.e.*, 1646].

CHARLES P.¹

To M^r Richard Mervin,
Batchelo^r in Divinity,
at Okehampton or elsewhere.

“Certain Prayers fitted to Severall occasions To be used in his Majesties Armies and Garrisons. Published by His Highnesse Command”—had been printed in Exeter somewhat earlier.

Notwithstanding that the plans of Prince Charles's Council had been further disconcerted by the sudden fall of Dartmouth on the 18th of January, the resolution, to which Lord Hopton adhered, of advancing from Launceston with all the forces that could be collected for the relief of Exeter, was confirmed; and the remainder of the month was devoted to preparations for carrying the resolution into effect.

¹ *Devonshire Notes and Notelets*, by Sir W. R. Drake, p. 2. Mr. Mervin was afterwards (1660) Chancellor of Exeter Cathedral, in 1661 Rector of Heanton Punchardon and a D.D., and died in 1669.

But before those preparations were matured a detached expedition was undertaken which is not the least interesting of the military transactions of this period in North Devon. "During my stay at Launceston," Lord Hopton states in his own narrative, "I sent a party with a good considerable relief to Dunster Castle, commanded by Col. Finch, who performed it very well."¹ Dunster Castle was then held by a Royalist garrison under Colonel Francis Wyndham, who subsequently assisted Charles the Second in his escape after the battle of Worcester. Since the beginning of January the castle had been closely besieged by Colonel Robert Blake, who had been set free, since his protracted and brilliant defence of Taunton, for other services to the cause of the Parliament. Blake had undermined and endeavoured to blow up the walls of the fortress, but without success. A highly apocryphal story which first appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1823, pt. i. p. 494, relates to this period. It is stated that the Parliamentarians threatened to expose Colonel Wyndham's mother, whom they had in their power, to the guns of the castle unless the garrison yielded; which threat both mother and son piously and patriotically derided. The garrison was reduced to the greatest straits when the party of some one thousand five hundred Horse and Foot, conveying ammunition and live stock, was detailed by Lord Hopton to its relief. It appears that five hundred of these troops were drawn from the garrison

¹ "Lord Hopton's Relation of the Proceedings in the West of England," &c., Carte's *Letters*, i. 110.

of Barnstaple.¹ In a letter written at Fairfax's headquarters on the 26th of January, from which I have already quoted, Mr. William Clarke reports that "Collonel Finche's Regiment is drawne Northward toward Bediford and Barnstable." The design was of course not suspected; but we may gather from this piece of intelligence that the detachment was then on its way from Launceston to Barnstaple where it was to be reinforced as otherwise appears. Whether the convoy then proceeded by the more direct and safer route across Exmoor, or by way of South Molton and Dulverton, is not apparent. It was an adventurous undertaking; but the interval had been opportunely taken of the withdrawal of Colonel Cook's brigade, and nothing more formidable than the weak Plymouth regiment was in that part of North Devon, and this appears to have been eluded. On the approach of the relieving force Blake was obliged to draw off, and the garrison of the castle was successfully relieved and revictualled on the 5th of February. Blake skirmished with the rear of Finch's party as they retired and then renewed the blockade. On the news of this successful exploit reaching the Parliamentary head-quarters on the same day, orders were promptly sent recalling Colonel Cook from Dorsetshire.²

¹ "There was but 800 Horse that went to relieve Dunster and 500 Foot which were of Barnstaple" (*The Moderate Intelligencer*, No. 50, Feb. 12-18, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxvi.). Several of the news-writers mention the return of this contingent to Barnstaple.

² "Lord Hopton's Relation." Sprigge's *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647.

It was not until the first week of February that the Foot regiments of Prince Charles's army were in marching order—if marching order it may be termed, when expected reinforcements and supplies were still wanting and sufficient transport could not be obtained. Launceston had been plundered of all its provisions, and for ammunition the lead had been stripped from the church and town-hall.¹ The following is an abstract of Lord Hopton's own statement of the fighting strength of the army of which he had assumed the command, made from his own "Relation" :—

Foot.

Of Guards about	240
General Digby's broken regiment about...	500
Cornish regiments that were under Sir Richard Grenville, about	550
Col. Slaughter's and Col. Wise's regiments, about	400
The train-bands of Cornwall "shrunk to nothing in effect, there remaining with me only Sir Chichester Wrey, Col. Richard Arundel, and Col. Jonathan Trelawney, with about 150 men between the three "	150
	<hr/>
	1,840

"These were all the Foot I had."

p. 181; ed. 1854, p. 190. "Siege and Surrender of Dunster Castle, 1645-6," by Emanuel Green, *Archæological Journal*, xxxvii. 386.

¹ Nehemiah Wallington's *Historical Notices*, ii. 275.

Horse.

The Prince's Guards, "a very handsome body of men and very exact upon duty" (commanded by Lord Capel), about ...	800
Lord Wentworth's (late Goring's); not exact upon duty, "which was indeed one great cause of our misfortune," ac- counted about	2,500
	<hr/> 3,300

Artillery.

"None."

Total of all arms ... 5,140

The actual numbers were probably understated. Sir Edward Hyde who, it may be supposed, was in possession of good information, writing to the Queen in the middle of February, informed her that Lords Hopton and Capel had with them 6,800 Horse and Foot.¹ The truth probably lies between the two estimates. The demoralized condition of the Royalist forces apparent in Lord Hopton's statement, it is now almost needless to say, was chiefly owing to those dissensions among the commanding officers which had become chronic and which the Prince's Council, to all appearance, had rather aggravated than appeased. These dissensions had, in Hopton's words, "bred a general unwieldiness amongst them both officers and soldiers." The Prince's Council, evidently thinking that matters had reached that pass when now or never something should be done, urged

¹ *Calendar of Clarendon State Papers*, i. 303.

an immediate advance. As it was not considered safe in the circumstances for the Prince to accompany the army, he removed from Launceston to Truro.

Lord Hopton, with the Foot, left Launceston on the 6th of February and marched to Stratton. Nearly three years before he had led another Royalist army—then an enthusiastic one—over the same ground. Whether or not the Prince's horse-guards (under Lord Capel), of whose action no mention has been made, accompanied the Foot is not stated. Wentworth's Horse, by estimate the major part of the Prince's army, were already, as we have seen, occupying the country between Holsworthy and Barnstaple with advanced posts as far east as Chulmleigh.

The military considerations which induced Lord Hopton to adopt a circuitous route to Exeter when the direct road through Okehampton lay open to him are not quite obvious. His own avowed object was to get between Barnstaple and the enemy. Sir Thomas Fairfax, on the other hand, divined, it seems correctly, that Hopton's intention was to secure Barnstaple as a basis for subsequent operations for the relief of Exeter and to cover the landing of supplies from Ireland or Wales "so much the forwarder towards the East."¹ Each of these distinguished commanders was therefore under the impression that his opponent was aiming at Barnstaple.

¹ Sprigge's *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 189; ed. 1854, p. 198.

We know that Sir Allen Apsley had promised a contingent from his garrison of 500 men for the Prince's army. He was now endeavouring to sweep into his stronghold supplies and contributions of money for its purposes from the surrounding country. The following is a copy of his mandate to one of the Hundreds, with the significant and well-understood threat in case of non-compliance in its tail :—

Whereas I have received expresse order and command from his Highnesse Prince Charles, for the leavying and collecting of the weekly rates of your Hundred of South-Moulton, which I am to imploy for the buying and making of provisions for the use and supply of his Highnesse his Army, and have straight charge given me from his Highnesse to effect this with all speed I can ; I do hereby therefore require you forthwith to issue forth your Warrants to all the petty Constables of your Hundred straightly charging them that they faile not to collect and bring three weekes contribution of their severall Parishes in money or wheat, which they are to pay and deliver in to William Gouldesborough, at the Fort of Barnstaple, by Munday next at the furthest ; and if any of your Parishes shall faile in the payment and full performance hereof by the time appointed, they must expect to have a party of my Lord Gorings Horse sent to them for the bringing in of the same. Given under my hand at Barnstaple this 8 of February, 1646.

ALLEN APSLEY.¹

To the High Constable of the Hundred
of South-Moulton.

The motive of the advance by way of Barnstaple being assumed, it is still not easy to understand

¹ *Perfect Passages*, &c., No. 69, Feb. 11-18, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxlv.

the meaning of the divergent direction of Lord Hopton's first day's march to Stratton. The explanation from his own account, if to the ordinary perception inadequate, is at least curious: "We moved to Stratton with scarce half of our ammunition, materials or provisions; hoping that our advance would facilitate that business in the country [county, *i.e.*, Cornwall] so that the rest would come speedily after us. But that hope failing, the like opinion of the Sheriff and Gentlemen of Cornwall that the country would supply us willingly, *being march'd out of it*, carried us to Torrington the 10th of the same month."¹ The Cornish people were, in fact, anxious to get rid of their friends; after the Royalist Horse had crossed the Tamar they fortified the bridges to prevent their return.² To obtain supplies from a country not yet made altogether a desert was probably the primary object of the day's march. It was reported that Hopton's troops escorted from Stratton "much cattle and sheep which, with salt and other provisions that were to come from Barnstaple, were for the relief of Exeter."³

The Royalist troops are stated to have made a forced march from Stratton to Torrington, "being eighteen large miles" in one day. This was the 10th of February. Having occupied Torrington, Lord Hopton determined to remain there until his

¹ "Relation of the Proceedings," &c., Carte's *Letters*, i. 110.

² *Perfect Passages*, &c., Jan. 21-27, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M. small 4tos, vol. ccxliii.

³ Sprigge's *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 182; ed. 1854, p. 192.

expected reinforcements of men and supplies of provisions had come up, and to hold it; although it does not appear that he had much reason at that time to apprehend any immediate attack. The Foot were distributed in the town, and the Horse, as they came in to the rendezvous, were disposed in the outskirts and neighbouring villages. Major-General Webb was quartered at Huntshaw and Lord Wentworth at Wear-Giffard, Mr. Fortescue's house. Two or three days later, warning came that the Parliamentary forces were on the move; and measures of defence were taken, by entrenching and barricading the approaches, by making "little fastnesses" —whatever that may mean—(according to the account of Sir Richard Bulstrode, who was present), and by felling trees across the roads, to obstruct access to the town. "All the ovens were made hot to dry the match which had got wet."¹

We left the head-quarters of the Parliamentary army at Chudleigh, at a time when distracting circumstances compelled the postponement of any further attempt upon Exeter by way of assault. As one of the issues of that distraction, it had already been in contemplation to send a detachment into North Devon for the "straightning" of Barnstaple, to obtain "better conveniency of quarter," and to suppress there the parties of the enemy's Horse which "miserably oppressed the country."²

¹ *The Moderate Intelligencer*, No. 50, Feb. 12-18, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxlv.

² Sprigge's *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 182; ed. 1854, pp. 190-1.

It was now resolved to continue the blockade of Exeter, and to draw the bulk of the forces towards Crediton—"with purpose [writes Sir Thomas Fairfax to Mr. Speaker Lenthall] to advance into the North of Devonshire also, either by the taking of Barnstable, or by blocking of it up, and raising a Force in that wel-affected corner to keep it in, so as having all cleer or made fast behind me, I might the better follow the remaining Field-Forces of the Enemy into Cornwall."¹

Just at this time, intercepted letters from Lord Wentworth to Sir John Berkeley, the Governor of Exeter, revealed Lord Hopton's intended movement. The Parliamentary generals at once resolved to advance into North Devon without delay; and, consequently, leaving Sir Hardress Waller to watch the blockade of Exeter, Fairfax and Cromwell broke up their head-quarters at Chudleigh on the 10th of February, the very day on which Hopton reached Torrington, and marched with the army to Crediton. It does not appear from Sir Thomas Fairfax's letter that he was at that time aware that Lord Hopton had left Launceston.²

¹ Letter printed in Sprigge's *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 188; ed. 1854, p. 197-203.

² Colonel Edward Wogan, in his "Proceedings of the New-moulded Army," &c., printed in Carte's *Letters* (i. 126), throws a further and a rather different light upon this crisis. He states that it had been already agreed that the (Parliamentary) Army should go into winter quarters; that this had been actually done—most of the Horse sent back into Somersetshire, the Foot placed about Chudleigh and Crediton, and General Massey's Brigade placed about Barnstable. He adds that all this was changed by the General's receipt of an important letter from a concealed source, pointing out that there were great divisions in the King's Army in Cornwall, that the Prince's Council were divided, that

On Saturday, the 14th of February, the Parliamentary army, forming a flying column, the whole of the baggage train being left at Crediton and nothing in the way of ammunition being taken but what could be carried on pack-horses, was again on the march, and on the same day reached Chulmleigh. Here the position of the enemy in force at Torrington seems to have been first learnt.

Chulmleigh, a country town of the smallest class consisting of not many more than a hundred houses, stands on the summit of a ridge of high ground, along which then passed the only high road from Exeter and Crediton to Barnstaple, and remains probably but little changed since the seventeenth century. In shape it is like the heraldic mill-rind, the centre being a small market-square scarcely large enough for the muster of five hundred men. This was not the first time, as we have seen, that its serenity was disturbed by the passage of military forces, nor had it been exempt from military exactions. To such an army as that which now invaded it the quarters offered must have been scanty enough. The spacious parish church was doubtless filled with soldiers, as was customary during the war, who lighted their watch-fires on the floor. The few great houses in the immediate neighbourhood of the town—Colliton, the old manor-house, still standing, of the Bury family; Affeton Castle, now in ruins, the

the Prince himself intended privately to leave the kingdom, and that if the Army "would advance speedily and take the present advantage they might have by reason of those distractions, he [Fairfax] might without doubt have his desire."

ancient seat of the Stukeleys; King's Nympton, the house of Sir Hugh Pollard, and Eggesford, the house of Lord Chichester, both since destroyed—were probably occupied, and their resources requisitioned by the horse-soldiery. The rector, Master Christopher Baitson, A.M., who was a "malignant" minister, of course kept aloof—he was afterwards sequestered for having refused the Covenant, and because he had harboured and armed the King's soldiers.¹ On that Sunday on which Fairfax's troops occupied Chulmleigh, the cherished afternoon discourse, we may be sure, was held forth by Hugh Peters, the Puritan zealot and jocular preacher, who attended the army. He it was who once said to his hearers, as the sand of the hour-glass at his elbow ran low, "I know you are good fellows; stay and take the other glass!"²

Those who are so disposed may, without any daring stretch of the imagination, realize to the mind's eye a group of remarkable men, all conspicuous in the political history of their country within the next few years, who now, grim and earnest in the business to which they had set their hands, had gathered in the darkening shadows of evening in that country church to catch the words of the zealous preacher. There, highest in military rank, although twelve years younger than Cromwell his lieutenant-general, was Fairfax—tall of stature, with features dark and strongly marked, and cheek showing an ugly scar got at Marston Moor. Of his

¹ Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*, pt. ii. p. 192.

² Peters is thought by Dr. S. R. Gardiner to have been a much maligned man (*Notes and Queries*, 7th Series, iv. 394).

personal characteristics Whitelock has left us a striking description — “a person of as meek and humble carriage as ever I saw in great employment . . . in action in the Field, I have seen him so highly transported that scarce any one durst speak a word to him, and he would seem more like a man distracted and furious than of his ordinary mildness and so far different temper.”¹ There was Cromwell, second in command, whose more familiar personality needs no description here ; Okey, colonel of dragoons, afterwards notorious as a “root and branch” man, or irreconcilable republican ; Ireton, an able and distinguished man, soon to be Cromwell’s son-in-law ; and Lambert, Fleetwood, and Harrison, also Cromwell’s confederates. Of these, Lambert died in a Devonshire prison, and Okey, Harrison, and the preacher himself were, as regicides and “sons of Belial,” hanged and quartered at Tyburn after the Restoration.

Sir Thomas Fairfax’s force consisted, according to the best authorities, of—

5 Regiments of Horse about	...	...	...	3,000
Dragoons	„	...	...	500
7 Regiments of Foot	„	...	...	6,000
				<hr/>
Total	...	...	...	9,500

Besides this force, there were yet to come up the 1,500 Horse and dragoons of Massey’s Brigade under Colonel Cook who had been hurriedly recalled from Dorsetshire. These were detailed to

¹ *Memorials*, ed. 1682, p. 210.

block up Barnstaple, whilst the operations of the main body were being carried on against the enemy.

On that Sunday, the 15th of February, the army had in the morning marched out two miles from Chulmleigh; but the weather being very wet, the ways bad, and the bridges, which had been broken down by the enemy, unrestored, Fairfax determined to make no further advance that day. The General's own regiment and two hundred Horse were sent forward, however, three or four miles by apparently two different roads to "amuse" the enemy. One party fell in with and defeated an advanced guard of the Royalists at Burrington, Lieut.-Colonel Dundas, a former deserter from the Parliamentary side, being severely wounded and taken prisoner. He remained for some time pending his recovery in the village of Ashreigney, on parole. The remainder of the army returned to Chulmleigh.

It was at this point of time that Sir Thomas Fairfax, writing to the Speaker of the House of Commons, entered into several considerations which he thought discouraged him from going on;—the superiority of the enemy in Horse, the possible continuance of wet weather, which would render the firearms useless for attack or defence, and the want of shelter for his troops, in that inclement season, and of forage for his horses, while the enemy were better provided and had the country secure at their back. Besides these drawbacks, there would be the absorption of a considerable part of his force in the blockade of Barnstaple. "Yet, on the other side," he wrote, "finding that by reason of the barrenness and long

exhausting of our Quarters behind us, we could neither keep our Horse so close together as to lye safe so neer the Enemy, nor indeed find subsistence for the Army, either where we were, or in any other Quarters more backward, where we could lye, so as to secure the siege of Excester from reliefe, and upon all considerations conceiving the affaires of the Kingdome did require us, and God by all did call us, [here we may imagine Cromwell to have interjected an approval] to make a present attempt upon the Enemy; Wee resolved to goe on, to try what God would doe for us, and trust him for weather, subsistence and all things." ¹

In this pious frame of mind resolution was at once taken by the Parliamentary General. Colonel Cook's Horse and dragoons were to advance towards Barnstaple; and on Monday, the 16th, drums were beating in Chulmleigh at four o'clock in the morning, and the army was moving off by the road which runs down a sloping spur of the hill on which Chulmleigh stands, and across the meadows in the valley of the Taw to Kesham Bridge, which, being then probably as now a timber tressle-bridge of very primitive construction, had been easily restored. At seven o'clock, as day was dawning, Fairfax's forces were drawn up in order of battle on Beaford Moor, beyond the village of Ashreigney. Much of the country about here is still unenclosed. I take this as the precise spot on which the troops deployed, as Sprigge states that it was "five miles short of Torrington," and Fairfax himself that it

¹ Letter in Sprigge's *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 189; ed. 1854, p. 199.

was within six miles of the enemy. From this spot two narrow roads, both leading to Torrington, diverged—the one to the right passing through the village of Roborough, and the other to the left through that of Beaford. It was by the former that apparently the army mainly advanced. The weather, which had hitherto been persistently wet, suddenly cleared up at the moment when the march was resumed.

The advanced guard, or “forlorn,” of Horse about the middle of the day reached Stevenstone, about two miles from Torrington, the seat of the elder branch of the Rolle family, then represented by Mr. Henry Rolle. It was the same “right fair house of bryke” of Tudor architecture, built in the reign of Henry VIII., which Leland the antiquary had seen and described nearly a century before. Some faint attempt had been made to fortify the place, and it was occupied by, it was supposed, about two hundred of the Royalist dragoons, who, on the approach of a selected party sent forward to attack the position, evacuated it, and were followed and harassed by the Parliamentary Horse to within a short distance of the town of Torrington. By five o’clock most of the army had reached Stevenstone, and were drawn up, Horse and Foot, in the deer-park. The road thence to Torrington for about a mile makes a slight descent, then becomes level, the ground falling away on either side, and within half a mile of Torrington rises slightly until it enters the town. Two long streets, Well Street and Calf Street, running almost parallel to each other from

the centre of the town eastward, terminate within a few yards of each other where they are connected at right angles by a short cross-road. Calf Street, the more northerly of the two, is the continuation of the road from Stevenstone. Whether or not precisely the same topographical conditions existed at that time, it was apparently hereabout that the Royalist defences, hereafter described as the barricadoes, were met with.

A "forlorn" of Foot was now sent forward half-way between Stevenstone and the town, where they lined the hedges to cover the retreat of the Horse in case they should have been drawn too far. The Royalist Foot, simultaneously, advanced and occupied the closes for about a quarter of a mile beyond the town, "and so the men faced one another within half musket-shot for about two hours, exchanging coarse language, and bullets now and then." The enemy showing a more threatening front, Colonel Hammond was sent from Stevenstone with a strong detachment of three regiments of Foot and some more Horse to support or bring off the "forlorns." It was then growing dark. The Royalist Foot began to withdraw within the town defences; a pause ensued; and it was thought that nothing further would be attempted that night. Thus terminated what may be called the first period of the fight.

Already, in the imminent prospect of a general action, the pass-word was given out to the Parliamentary Army—*Emmanuel God with us*; and every man was to put a sprig of furze in his hat. The Royalists' word was—*We are with you*; and their

distinctive mark a handkerchief tied about the right arm. Their word and signal being early betrayed, the Parliamentarians took a second pass-word, which was *Truth*, and adopted a "hand-carchier" or white mark on their hats.¹ These distinctive badges were not unusual, as many of the men on both sides were notoriously dressed and equipped alike in leather doublet and pot head-piece.

The story of the Battle of Torrington, coloured by the striking effects incident to a night-attack, has too much local interest associated with it not to demand a large place in any detailed account of the Civil War as it affected Devonshire. On wider grounds the battle is historically remarkable as the decisive one of the final campaign in the West, which ruined the cause of King Charles.²

¹ *A Letter from a Gentleman in his Excellency's Army*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., large 4tos, vol. xxi.

² The literature of the Battle of Torrington is exceptionally copious. We have, firstly, the rare advantage of possessing narratives of the action written by the commanders in chief on both sides. Sir Thomas Fairfax's account is contained in his letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons, printed in Sprigge's *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 187; ed. 1854, p. 197. Lord Hopton's is part of his "Relation of the Proceedings in the West of England," &c., printed in Carte's *Collection of Original Letters and Papers*, &c., 1739, i. 109. Besides these, which may be termed official descriptions of the battle, we have Sprigge's own account; Rushworth's letter to the Speaker, printed in the *Sixth Report of the Historical MSS. Commission*, p. 100; and a graphic narrative by an officer on the Parliamentary side, Colonel Wogan, then a captain in Okey's dragoons, contained in his "Proceedings of the New-moulded Army," &c., also printed in Carte's *Letters*, &c., i. 126. In these contemporary accounts there are the usual discrepancies, chiefly as to time, which are to be found in almost all different descriptions of battles; but I have found no great difficulty in compiling from them my own story. Of modern accounts of the battle that I have seen, there

It will now be desirable to turn to Lord Hopton's narrative of what was happening on the other side.

It appears that during the previous week a Royalist detachment of 500 Horse and dragoons had occupied the village of Roborough, with an advanced guard at Burrington, another village three miles from Chulmleigh. On the first intelligence of the presence of Fairfax in force at Chulmleigh, which Lord Hopton states was brought to him by a young lieutenant and a few troopers who had been "out that way without leave a-plundering," the guard was ordered to withdraw. It has been seen that it came into collision with Fairfax's Horse, before the withdrawal was completely effected, on the Sunday. The main body made good its retreat to Torrington, leaving the dragoons of the party at Stevenstone to protect its rear. To their assistance 300 musketeers were sent out from the town, who held their assailants in check until darkness set in, when they were withdrawn. This brings us to the same point of time at which we left the account of the proceedings of the Parliamentarians.

Lord Hopton, says the historian of the Rebellion, knowing, amidst all his discouragements, that he had little hope except in the result of a battle, was content to abide the issue of an assault in a position naturally strong and capable of being held against a superior force. The situation of Torrington has been already described. On the southern side of the town

is none better than the one contained in Mr P. Q. Karkeek's able paper on "Fairfax in the West" in the *Transactions of the Devonshire Association*, viii. 117.

was a steep declivity, with the river Torridge at its foot, which made it practically unassailable from that direction. It was from the east that it was most accessible to attack, and from that quarter the anticipated onslaught was now to be met. The Royalist Foot were therefore distributed to their posts along the line of defences constructed on that side, and in reserve within the town. Cleveland's¹ and Wentworth's cavalry were disposed on the commons, on the north side of the town; the Prince's guards, commanded by Lord Capel, on the Town Common, on the west side. Two hundred Horse were in the streets, detailed in parties of forty each, to the support of the Foot. Lord Hopton had at his elbow Sir John Digby, who was familiar with the ground—the same Cavalier who, a little more than two years before, had signally discomfited the Parliamentarians of Barnstaple and Bideford on the commons.

It has been impossible to arrive at anything more than an approximate estimate of the relative strength of the two armies. But while the Horse seems to have been about equal numerically, the Royalists were certainly inferior in Foot, and these, mostly Cornishmen, were not the men who had fought their way up the hill at Stratton, contested with Waller's London trained-bands for the field of Lansdown, and stormed Bristol; but either new and untrustworthy levies or the remains of disorganized regiments. Fairfax's Foot, on the other hand, were veterans who, if they had flinched before

¹ The Earl of Cleveland was Lord Wentworth's father.

the flower of the King's army at Naseby, had since won their laurels in an unbroken series of successful encounters. Of the comparative quality of the Horse enough has already been said or implied. On the one side, conspicuously, were Cromwell's disciplined "Ironsides"; while on the other the Royal Horse, although individually brave, and they were mostly Englishmen too, were notoriously demoralized and out of the control of their leaders.

The advanced party of Fairfax's army, which now lay watching the Royalist defences, consisted, according to the narrative of Colonel Wogan, who was present, of 1,000 musketeers, 500 Horse, and 500 dragoons; they were ordered to make good their ground until the morning. Sir Thomas Fairfax had fixed his head-quarters at Stevenstone. Later in the evening, we may assume after supper, he and his lieutenant-general, Oliver Cromwell, went to visit the outposts, when all was still; and detecting what they believed to be symptoms of a movement within the town as of a retreat, sent a few dragoons to steal up to the barricades and make an observation. These reached the "turnpike,"¹ and were received, to their surprise, by a sharp volley of musketry. The rest of the dragoons—accounted

¹ This was probably only a moveable barrier across the road entering the town. Bailey, however, describes a more elaborate contrivance as the military turnpike—"a spar of wood about fourteen feet long and about eight inches in diameter, cut in the form of a hexagon, every side being bored full of holes, through which short pikes are run about six feet long pointed with iron, which standing out every way being set in a breach are of use to stop an enemy's entrance into a camp" (*Dictionary Britannicum*, 1736).

the smartest men of the army—upon this, went on to the support of their comrades, and the Foot, without waiting for orders, followed. It was now, reconciling as well as may be the conflicting accounts as to time, about nine o'clock, and the fight was becoming general; the Parliamentarians gave way, and were driven back into the enclosures from which they had emerged. Fairfax, seeing the critical position, brought up more forces, leaving orders with Lieutenant-General Cromwell to second him with the remainder.

Here, in the enclosures, within six fields from the town, as Rushworth states with precision, the fight went on for about two hours. The Royalists were at length outflanked by their assailants and beaten from hedge to hedge—"each hedge a bulwark" for them. The barricades were then forced, after a desperate struggle, the defenders disputing the passages with pikes and the butt-ends of their muskets. Having gained an entrance into the town, the Parliamentarians were twice repulsed by the Royalist Horse, and almost driven out again, had not Colonel Hammond, with a handful of officers and soldiers, held the barricades and gained time to rally the men; and Major Stephens coming up with a forlorn hope of Horse again forced a passage.¹ This, according to the Parliamentary accounts, was the decisive moment.

Lord Hopton who, accompanied by Major-General

¹ The forlorn hope of Horse in those days, strange as we should think it now, was an ordinary feature of a storm (Major Walford's *Parliamentary Generals of the Great Civil War*).

Sir John Digby, was at this time riding from post to post encouraging his men, happened to be in the main street (which I take to be Calf Street) as Fairfax's men forced their way in. His troopers already retiring involved him in the *mêlée*; Digby's horse was killed under him, and Hopton himself was wounded in the face by a pike-thrust, and his horse, after bringing him off to the door of his lodging, fell dead.

Sir Thomas Fairfax, with the main body of his Horse, now entered and occupied the market-place, an inconsiderable area in the centre of the town. The Foot had already begun to plunder.¹

Having obtained a remount, Lord Hopton had ridden off to Lord Cleveland's brigade of Horse stationed in reserve on the north side of the town and ordered them up; but on his way back most of his infantry were met running away over the lines, and he in vain endeavoured to rally them. The cavalry led by Sir John Digby then charged up to the barricades which were in the hands of the enemy, but could get no farther without the help of the Foot who were shifting for themselves. It was at this instant, according to Lord Hopton's own "Relation," that the catastrophe happened which signaled the storming of Torrington.² Fifty, or as other accounts state, eighty barrels of the Royalists' gunpowder, which had been stored, according to a prevailing custom during the war, in the parish

¹ Wogan is the only authority for this statement.

² Sprigge puts it a little later—after the Royalists had evacuated the town. (*Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 186; ed. 1854, p. 196).

church, blew up with a terrible explosion. Two hundred prisoners who had been taken by the Parliamentarians during the assault, and who had been temporarily secured in the church, with their guard of about twenty men posted in the churchyard, were blown into the air with the fragments of the building. The surrounding houses were wrecked, and most of the windows in the town were blown in; "the walls of the church all fell and dispersed abroad, there standing not above the height of six or seven foot." One who was a spectator of the scene writes: "The blowing up of the church was the most terriblest sight that ever I beheld."¹

The retreat of the Royalist Foot became a rout. The Horse which were in the town, defending their rear from repeated attacks, retired by way of Mill Street, a long steep street which runs diagonally down the declivity on the south side of the town to Taddyport Bridge, over which most of them escaped; but the remainder of the Horse went off over the town commons on the west side to Rothern Bridge, a mile lower down the stream,² or forded the river at different places. The Prince's foot-guards who held the Castle Green are stated to have been the last to abandon the town, and they must have got away with comparative ease by streaming down the steep

¹ Letters printed in *A Fuller Relation of Sir Thomas Fairfax's Routing all the Kings Armies in the West, &c.*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxlviii.

² In Leland's time these appear to have been called "South bridge" and "West bridge" respectively; the former (Taddyport) bridge, of three arches appears to survive, although the original structure is concealed by modern work.

slope at their rear where no cavalry could possibly follow them.

Rushworth, who wrote his hurried dispatch to the Speaker of the House of Commons at five o'clock in the morning, states that Sir John Digby's last ineffectual charge was made *after* the explosion, the precise time of which he fixes at a little before eleven o'clock ; and that this charge being repulsed the rout became general.

At daylight, all the Royalist Foot had disappeared. The Horse, retreating with less disorder, Lord Hopton himself bringing up the rear, had, by different ways, gone off in the direction of Bideford and Buckland Brewer. The pursuit was soon abandoned.

Both Lord Hopton, in his "Relation," and Lord Clarendon, in his *History of the Rebellion*, severely condemn the cowardice and "baseness" of the Royalist troops. But the charge is not consistent with the impression of the witnesses on the other side ; for Sir Thomas Fairfax calls the assault "a hotter service than any storm this army hath before been upon" ¹—in a campaign which included the storming of Bristol and of Basing House.

It may be remarked that no prominence has been given by the historian of the campaign to the presence of Oliver Cromwell at the storming of Torrington. Sprigge, as a matter of fact, does not mention him by name, but only as "the lieutenant-general." It is a curious fact, not noticed by any commentator, that Cromwell's four months' dispensation from disqualification for military service under

¹ Letter in Sprigge's *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 192 ; ed. 1854, p. 202.

the "Self-denying Ordinance," which had been granted to him by the Parliament, expired on the day after the battle. Carlyle has little to say about Cromwell's part in this campaign in the West, and his researches have not turned up any of Cromwell's letters during the campaign subsequent to the one of the 17th of October, written from Salisbury, in which the writer implies that he is hastening to join Fairfax.¹ In the opening scene of the assault of Torrington, the action of this great soldier, whose genius it was to miss no opportunity of striking hard, is present. There was less room for the display of his customary ardour afterwards; the assault was won by the Foot, and neither Hopton's nor Cromwell's Horse were of much use in narrow ways and amongst high enclosures in the darkness of a February night.²

¹ *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, by Thomas Carlyle, *passim*.

² I have used the word "darkness" conventionally. A Parliamentarian, in a letter printed in the tract, *A Fuller Relation*, &c., from which I have already quoted, wrote: "About ten a clock at night by the light of the moon we fell upon them." In a book of *Chronograms* by Mr. James Hilton, F.S.A., there is an extract made from a rare tract entitled *Chronometra memorabilium rerum*, &c., printed at Cambridge in the year 1646, and relating to the civil wars in England which I here give, not as a specimen of this form of wasted ingenuity, but for its reference to the point. It is as follows:—

LVCe bIs oCtaVâ febrVI, LVnaqVe rVbentI,
regaLes fVerVnt DIspersI CLaDe reCentI. = 1646.

(The date is obtained by adding up the total sum of the figures represented by the large Capital letters or Roman numerals.) The lines are translated by Mr. Hilton:—

"On the twice eighth day of February and at full moon the royal forces were scattered with fresh slaughter."

No accurate estimate of the number of the killed in this action is possible. Sprigge vaguely states that two hundred of the Royalist army were slain besides those who perished by the explosion. The Parliamentary party admit the loss of only a few. The parish register records in a comprehensive note:—"There have bin buried the 16th 17th 18th 19th and 20th 21th Dayes 63 souldyers." Those buried on the 16th had probably fallen in one of the outpost affairs previous to the battle which took place on that day.¹

The blowing-up of Torrington church was believed at the time to have been a wilful act. Sprigge's circumstantial account is that it was done by "a desperate villaine, one Watts, whom the Enemy had hired with thirty pounds for that purpose, as he himselve confessed the next day, when he was pul'd out from under the rubbish and timber."² It is, of course, conceivable that Lord

It is not for me to question the meaning given to the word "rubenti"; but, computed by the lunation tables in Sir Harris Nicolas's *Chronology of History*, and also by the incidence of Easter-day in that year, the moon on the 16th of February, 1646 (Old Style), was just entering her second quarter. There must have been some moonlight therefore up to about eleven o'clock, but little or none afterwards.

¹ In the nave of Langtree church is a grave-stone on which is an inscription to the memory of "John Fraine who was slain at Great Torrington . . . Anno Dom 1646." Grace, the widow of "Major Fraine," who appears to have survived him more than fifty-seven years, was buried underneath the same stone. I am indebted for this note to the Rev. J. Ingle Dredge.

² *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 186; ed. 1854, p. 196. That this theory was adopted by the Parliament there is no doubt. Although the House of Commons referred to a Committee on the 30th of June, 1647, the question of "reedifying the church of Torrington" (Whitelock's *Memorials*), nothing apparently came of the reference, for in the following year

Hopton had given instructions that, in the event of a retreat becoming necessary, the gunpowder stored in the church should be destroyed rather than that it should fall into the hands of the enemy. This would have been only one of the exigencies of war. But it is utterly improbable that he should have given an order to fire the magazine, knowing—and in any case it is not likely that he did know—that many of his own men were prisoners within the building. The character of the man precludes such a belief. On the whole, the catastrophe was more likely to have been accidental. Such explosions, arising from the loose storage of gunpowder, were not rare, and Lord Hopton himself had been terribly injured by one in the open field after the battle of Lansdown in 1643.

But religious capital was to be made out of the catastrophe, which was the bewildering climax of the storming of Torrington, and a warning to be drawn from it to the confusion of ritualists for all time. To the sensitive minds of the Puritans it was a "hellish plot" against his Excellency Sir Thomas Fairfax. In one of the circumstances of the explosion a refreshing miracle was discovered, by implication, and forthwith formally certified. A copy of this remarkable certificate occurs in an "Epistle Dedicatory" prefixed to a work entitled *The Discovery Of the Wonderfull preservation of his Excellencie Sir Thomas Fairfax, &c.*, by its author, John Heydon,

both Houses ordered a Grant to the Mayor, &c., for a General Collection throughout England and Wales for the reparation of the church, reciting that the magazine of gunpowder had been fired by the enemy.

Minister of the Gospel, which is in reality a long-winded and totally irrelevant essay called "Some Gospel Truths Catechistically laid down, explained and vindicated." ¹ It is as follows:—

We whose names are here subscribed do testifie, that when the Publick place of Gods worship was blown up by a hellish plot, and his Excellency was wonderfully preserved, there fell out by Divine Providence, that which we look upon as *mira non mirabilia*, viz. though both the Books of Common Prayer were blown up or burnt, yet the blessed Bible was preserved and not obliterated, although it were blown away; and also the Library, and the books, together with the Records of the Town were wonderfully preserved: I do testifie, *John Voysey* Maior. We also testifie, *Richard Gay*, *William White* Capt. *John Ward*, *Henry Semor* Schoolmaster, and *John Heydon* Minister of the Gospel.

Lest the gist of this precious example of superstition and bigotry should escape the reader, it may be as well to explain that the *Book of Common Prayer*, as a rag of Popery, had been just abolished by an Ordinance of Parliament.²

Although the victory of Torrington was not at first recognized as so important as it afterwards

¹ London: Printed by M. Simmons, 1647. The Rev. J. Ingle Dredge informs me that the treatise was issued in the same year with a long alternative title beginning *Mans battes & Gods goodnes or some Gospel truths laid down*, &c. This was probably the original title-page, the other being afterwards substituted when the incident at Torrington had suggested a more "taking" one.

² By the Ordinance of 23rd of August, 1645. The penalty for using the Book of Common Prayer, even "in any private place or Family," was, for the first offence, £5; for the second, £10; for the third, one whole year's imprisonment without bail or mainprize (*Rushworth's Collections*, vi. 205).

turned out to be—much less decisive, as it really was—by order of Parliament the 15th of March was set apart as a day of solemn thanksgiving in London for the “great mercy,” and two sermons were preached in St. Margaret’s Church on the occasion. As a complement to this it may be mentioned that Theophilus Powell, A.M., the vicar of Torrington, was turned out of his living chiefly for a sermon on 1 Pet. ii. 17: “Fear God. Honour the king.”¹

It was the Protector, if I am not mistaken, who first introduced the practice of naming the national ships-of-war after famous victories; and so in due time with the *Newbury*, the *Marston Moor*, and the *Naseby*—probably old ships renamed, as they were again renamed at the Restoration—the *Torrington*, of fifty-four guns, appeared in the Navy-list of the Commonwealth.

Tradition says that the retreating Royalists made a stand at Henbury, an ancient British hill-fort in the parish of Buckland Brewer. This, however, is erroneous; the immediate pursuit was not carried very far. Lord Hopton himself states in his “Relation” that he brought off the Horse safe to the borders of Cornwall on the morning of Tuesday, the day after the battle, and most of the Foot had dispersed. It is stated that cannon-balls have been found near Henbury Fort; but unfortunately for this part of the tradition neither of the two armies had any artillery. There were apparently many straggling parties which made off by different ways, and one of these seems

¹ Walker’s *Sufferings of the Clergy*, pt. ii. 329.

to have got into Barnstaple. The general disorder and confusion of Hopton's retreat will, however, be best read in the following extract from a graphic and locally interesting letter written, in the midst of the events described, by "W. C.," *i.e.*, William Clarke, one of Mr. Rushworth's clerks:—

. . . On Tuesday last [Feb. 17] the remaining party of the enemy took up guides to Holsworthy, and intended to quarter there and Lutcombe [Sutcombe] and Putford, and to drive their cattell into Cornwall. Hopton was then with them, but none of the foote then come up to them, they then resolved to stay at Holsworthy to gather as many foot as they could, and the better to hinder our pursuite to pull downe Woodford Bridge over Touridge, betweene Newton and Milton, where many of their horse were, many stragling parties went towards Biddiford and Barnstable in great hast, and affrightment: The 400 foote which are all they have left (as before with Armes), Tuesday by breake of day passed over Beddiford bridge in the way to Kilkhampston and Stratton: another party of their horse, with whom the Lord Capell was cut in the head, passed over at a Ford and went a blinde way for Stratton with his company, there was two considerable persons carried in horse-litters growning and crying out for paine but not knowing who they were: Those which came that day from Hetherley [Hatherleigh] say, that they met many stragling foot by two or three in a company, who said they were going to their own homes, they likewise met many straglers of their horse which posted up and downe in great haste and feare: But the cheife body of their horse are gone to Launceston, where the Lord Hopton is to meet them. They generally blame the Cornish foote, saying, that if they had stood to it, it had beene a more bloudy bout, and that the Cornish were glad we came against that Towne, that they might have an occa-

sion to go into their own Countrey. Hopton is certainly wounded and had his horse shot under him, staying with the last to bring up the Reere.¹

This letter, which is dated the 18th of February, refers to events which could not possibly have happened earlier than on the preceding day, the date of which I have interpolated. "Tuesday last," the reference made to it, is an expression which leads to an inference that the letter was probably written somewhat later.

On that same Tuesday, the day after the storming of Torrington, Fairfax had, it appears, detached some regiments of Horse and Foot with the object of following up and harassing the retreating enemy as far as Holsworthy. But the Royalist Horse were found to have already quitted that place, and to have gone into Cornwall, and the Cornish Foot had made their way, it was supposed, back to their own county. Many of the straggling foot-soldiers, mostly Devonshire men, came in and enlisted themselves in the Parliamentary army, professing that they had only awaited an opportunity of doing so. The war had produced a plentiful supply of this class of mercenary soldiers. The prisoners who did not care to take service were discharged with a small gratuity to take them to their homes. Fairfax then determined to give his army a few days' rest at Torrington after their "unseasonable marches, miserable quarters, and hard duty;" and it was again, Sprigge says, "a time of extreme wet weather."

¹ Printed in *A more Full Relation of the continued successes of His Excellency Sir Thomas Fairfax, &c.*, London, 1645 [1646], King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxlix.

It will be remembered that while the advance of the Parliamentary army from Chulmleigh was taking place the detachment of Massey's Brigade, under Colonel Cook, was watching Barnstaple, in order to prevent any co-operation of the garrison with Lord Hopton's army. It is presumable that the force under Cook (all we know of whom from Sprigge is that he was "a gentleman of much temper and resolution"), consisting of 1,500 Horse and dragoons, loosely occupied the neighbouring villages to the south and east of the town. The question how to deal with Barnstaple was now a pressing one; and Commissary-General Ireton was sent with a reconnoitring party to "view it" and ascertain what available quarters there were for completely blockading it. This was probably not Ireton's first view of Barnstaple; he had been a gentleman-trooper in Lord Essex's life-guard, and may have been shut up there when the town was besieged by Goring. As one result of this reconnaissance, a regiment of Foot and some Horse were sent to seize and occupy the Earl of Bath's house at Tawstock, which Fairfax thought would be the means of effectually keeping in the garrison on that side—in other words, securing the left bank of the Taw; and he intimates that he "shall try what will be done upon it otherways whilst the Army takes a little rest hereabouts."¹

If it had appeared that Barnstaple could then have been taken by a *coup-de-main* it seems obvious that

¹ Letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons, printed in Sprigge's *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 187; ed. 1854, p. 202.

Fairfax would not have wasted this interval, nor have submitted to the necessity of leaving a considerable body of his Horse behind him when the pursuit of Hopton's retreating forces, still more than a match for him numerically in that arm, was of such importance to the completeness of his victory. The inference suggested is that Barnstaple was too well defended to be attacked with any prospect of immediate success even by the effective and elated army which now lay within a dozen miles of it. Such, at least, is my reading of the evidence. It was after writing the letter to the Speaker from which a quotation has just been made, that Fairfax decided at a council of war at the head-quarters, on the 20th of February, that the siege of Barnstaple was not to be pressed further at that time. Exeter and Barnstaple were in the same category. The destruction of the enemy in the field was of more immediate consequence and would, it was considered, of itself lead to the surrender of those places if they had not in the mean time been starved out by a strict blockade. Besides, a prompt advance into Cornwall was desirable to anticipate the landing of reinforcements which the Royalists were expecting from France. This expectation was not wholly baseless, as it was well known that Queen Henrietta Maria and Lord Jermyn were straining every diplomatic nerve to obtain the help of a French contingent. Meanwhile, a disposition of forces was made for the investment of Barnstaple ; and, this corner of Devonshire being considered "well-affected" to Parliament, it was sanguinely hoped that a regiment might be raised in

it to assist in the blockade. What success resulted from the effort is not stated. With regard to what was going on within the lines of Barnstaple during this crisis there is absolutely nothing whatever at present known.

On Monday, the 23rd of February, the whole of Fairfax's army was in motion and advancing to Holsworthy. As a *finale* to the series of events at Torrington, Hugh Peters, on the previous Saturday, had held forth from a balcony in the market-place to the soldiers and country people, and, it is said, "much impressed their hearts."

Lord Hopton, in the mean time, had been collecting all that could be got together of his scattered Foot, to the number of about a thousand—the rest having "run home." His still considerable body of Horse had kept to their colours. The Summer-leaze, an open down, now sacred to the seaside visitors who resort to Bude, was their rendezvous. A fortuitous course of circumstances had brought Lord Hopton once more to the foot of the hill from which, three years before, he, with Bevill Grenville, Slanning, and Trevanion, since fallen in King Charles's cause, had driven the Parliamentarians of Devonshire. In this crisis the Prince of Wales, by his Council, was writing to the Cornish gentry individually—"Haste, haste, for your life!"—urging them to get speedily up to the army "all the trayned men, stragling souldgers and others" who were "expected to advance upon this occasion."¹

The limitations of this work will not allow me to

¹ Letter of Feb. 24 in Polwhele's *Traditions and Recollections*, i. 20.

follow in detail the subsequent and disastrous retreat of Hopton's army. Sir John Digby was left with a body of Horse to protect the rear and bear the brunt of the steady and skilful advance of Fairfax and Cromwell. A short conflict which took place at the passage of North Tamerton Bridge was the last serious effort of resistance. Before the end of the month all was virtually over. The whole of Hopton's remaining force was retiring in disorder upon Bodmin by way of Camelford and Launceston. One whole regiment of Foot, Colonel Edgcumbe's, had already surrendered to the enemy. Fairfax had taken especial precautions to prevent the Royalist Horse, still estimated to number four or five thousand, from breaking through ; and had sent back orders to Colonel Cook, who was investing Barnstaple, to exercise the utmost vigilance in meeting the case if they should do so and take that direction. On the 5th of March, Fairfax was in a position to invite Lord Hopton in polite terms to a surrender. Some days elapsed, during which, while many of the Royalists made ill-organized efforts to break through, and some sharp skirmishes took place, others—officers as well as privates—were making their own terms ; but, still retiring, until Truro was reached, they were inexorably closed in by the enemy. In the result, on the 14th of March, a treaty was finally concluded, by which the whole of Lord Hopton's army surrendered and was disbanded.

Meanwhile, Prince Charles had sought more security in the fine old circular castle of Henry the Eighth's

time which crowned, as it still crowns, the height of Pendennis, and was held by the venerable Colonel John Arundell, of Trerice, and a Royalist garrison. On the 2nd of March, when news came that his army was retiring from Bodmin and that the enemy, in the words of Lord Clarendon, were "marching furiously after," there was reasonable apprehension of the Prince's safety in the minds of his Council, and Mr. Fanshawe was despatched to Lord Hopton's quarters for advice in the circumstances. Sir Edward Hyde had gone to Pendennis some days before to have a frigate provisioned in readiness for the Prince's escape. There was no doubt of the critical position in which the Prince was placed; that same night he embarked from the secret water-port of the castle and, on the 4th, landed at one of the Isles of Scilly.¹ He was accompanied by the Earl of Berkshire, Lord Colepepper and Sir Edward Hyde; and not long afterwards Lords Hopton and Capel joined the refugees. After a stay of nearly six weeks at St. Mary's, where they were much straitened for want of necessary provisions, the party transferred themselves to Jersey.

This may be a convenient place to notice, parenthetically, the sequel of the lives of the two distinguished Cavaliers who were by their actions the least open to animadversion of all those who, during the war, with the variety of temper which we have seen, fought for the King's cause in North Devon.

¹ Letter of Sir Edward Hyde in Carte's *Life of James, Duke of Ormonde*, 1736, iii. 450.

Lord Hopton, who in his exile drew much solace from the intimate friendship and companionship of Sir Edward Hyde, died at Bruges in the year 1652—"without any issue," says Lloyd in his *Memoires, &c.*, "besides those of his soul, his great thoughts, and greater actions." Such a panegyric leaves but little to be said. It does not appear that Lord Hopton took any part in the enterprises of the Royalist refugees, after the King's death, which brought about what is called the Second Civil War.

Sir John Digby, who, from his having twice come before Barnstaple in a hostile character, has a peculiar interest for us, went also with Prince Charles into exile. Peacock, in the *Army Lists of the Roundheads and Cavaliers*,¹ erroneously supposes that he returned to England and was the Sir John Digby who was present in Pontefract Castle when it surrendered to the Parliament in March, 1649. It is a curious fact that there were three, if not four, contemporary Sir John Digbys during the Civil War; and there is scarcely a writer who has not, when the occasion arose, hopelessly confounded them in some way one with another. The Sir John Digby with whom we are concerned was the second son of the historic Earl of Bristol, and consequently brother of George Lord Digby, the subtle, clever, and not irreproachable Secretary of State to Charles the First. John Digby was born in 1618; of Magdalene College, Oxford, 1634. He came into Devonshire with Sir Ralph Hopton at the beginning of the war as Captain of a

¹ Second Edition, 1874, p. 13.

troop of Horse which he had himself raised. As Colonel he commanded the Royalist Horse at the battle of Stratton, in May, 1643; repelled an attack of the Parliamentary forces of North Devon at Torrington in the following August, and received the consequent capitulation of Barnstaple. He was at times in command before Plymouth during the long siege, and received there a severe wound in the eye from a rapier; unsuccessfully attacked Barnstaple after its revolt to the Parliament in 1644; was knighted, and as Major-General held command under Lord Hopton at the final battle of Torrington. The close of his career illustrates the destitution to which many of the adherents of the Stuarts were reduced. It is as strange as that of Lord Goring who ended his life as a monk, or as that of Goring's fellow reprobate, Sir Francis Dodington, who, as an exile in France, maintained himself by selling English knives and buckles.¹ After having for some time attended the Court of Prince Charles, this *beau sabreur*, we are told, "retired to Pontoise [near Paris], entered himself among the religious there, became a secular priest, said mass daily to the English nuns, and died there after the Restoration."²

With regard to Fairfax's campaign in Devonshire and Cornwall, the military critic thinks it "not too much to say that its strategical plan would have reflected honour on any general, and that its conductor, whether Fairfax or Cromwell was the real chief, was a man of the first rank among skilful

¹ Collinson's *Somersetshire*, iii. 519.

² Collins's *Peerage of England*, ed. 1779, viii. 252.

soldiers.”¹ The pacification was accomplished with remarkable consideration for the defeated Royalists, and was a great political success.

Leaving the fortresses of Pendennis and St. Michael's Mount to be reduced at leisure, the army returned eastward, by way of Launceston and Okehampton. Fairfax himself visited Plymouth by the way, where he was received with great rejoicing and a salute of 300 guns. The long and harassing siege was at length brought to an end. The army remained one night at Okehampton and left it on the 29th of March, which was Easter day, reaching Crediton and occupying that town and the neighbouring villages the same night.

Fairfax, on his advance from Torrington in pursuit of Hopton's beaten army, had left Colonel Cook with 1,000 Horse and 500 Foot to block up Barnstaple. The new levy which was expected to be raised in the district probably never put in an appearance. The policy of the Parliamentary General, it has been sufficiently apparent, was a waiting one with regard to this business; the same treatment was being applied to Exeter. It had been held that in either case nothing was to be gained by an expenditure of life on an assault; that the surrender of these places was only a question of time; and that meanwhile there was no occasion for hurry. It might be questioned, on the other hand, whether the investing forces would be altogether

¹ Major N. L. Walford, R.A., *The Parliamentary Generals of the Great Civil War*, p. 162.

content to sit entirely inactive in these circumstances. There is no indication, however, that Sir Hardress Waller, who had been left before Exeter, made any attempt upon that city; and I have failed to discover that during the five weeks, counting from the beginning of the blockade of Barnstaple, Colonel Cook, although with a force superior in number to that of the besieged, and knowing that there was a friendly population within the town, made any attempt upon the place. At all events, the intelligencers, whose attention was absorbed by the more stirring interest of the campaign then coming to its last throes in Cornwall, and the war-correspondents, so to speak, who were with the army, have left us no information whatever. The garrison and the inhabitants, however, during this time must have been more and more straitened and distressed by the want of provisions; and desultory sallies and skirmishes were, it seems, the result. It is to be remembered that Cook's force consisted principally of cavalry, and that he had been ordered to be vigilantly on his guard to prevent any of the enemy's Horse, which might elude the pursuit, from attempting to escape back through North Devon. This duty may have left him but little opportunity of attempting anything serious against Barnstaple.

The sequel of the defence of Barnstaple was not, however, to be much longer delayed. About the 25th or 26th of March, the blockading force was strengthened by the accession of Colonel Robert Blake with his regiment, temporarily detached from

the besieging force before Dunster Castle. "Letters from the West," reports the *Moderate Intelligencer*, under the date March 28, "tell us . . . Colonel Blake is come before Barnstaple having left countrymen before Dunster Castle."¹ The immediate effect of this reinforcement was an assault upon, apparently, some point in the line of entrenchments which enclosed the town. A faint rumour of this affair reached Columb-John, Fairfax's head-quarters, on the 31st, and was commented upon by the correspondent "W. C.," in a letter published by order of Parliament, from which the following is an extract :—

Munday March 30, we stayed at *Crediton*, had intelligence of the Enemies resolutions in *Barnstaple*, to quit the Towne and betake themselves to the Great Fort and Castle, which probably before this time is effected : And the speech is That upon the coming of Colonell *Blake* with his Regiment from *Dunster*, about two daies since, they left the Towne, onely some few for a Guard, which our men beate off, killed seven, with the losse of foure ; the Skirmish is certain, but whether our men are in possession I cannot yet assure you, we having as yet received no Letters thereof.

The writer continues with an amusing reference to our bloodthirsty acquaintance, James Apsley, who had been fretting all this while within the lines of Barnstaple :—"It is generally believed that Sir Allen Apsley is willing to surrender the Towne, Fort and

¹ No. 56, March 26–April 2, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccliv.

Castle, but that his desperate Brother swears he will cut him to peeces if he offers to surrender the Castle." ¹

I am the more careful to indicate the source of this information, because it is the only actual report that I have discovered of this attack upon Barnstaple. It is abundantly evident that no actual lodgment was effected, and the town, dominated as it was by the Castle and the Great Fort, would not probably have been tenable if there had been. Another correspondent at head-quarters, who wrote a few days later, confirms this, giving expressly the reason:—"Barnstable . . . is made very strong, for there is a Castle at one end of the Towne, and an exceeding strong Fort on the other; so that the Towne is not to be entred untill one or both the other be reduced." ²

Whatever may have been Blake's part in this assault it is clear enough that it was practically a failure, and no impression had been made upon the real defences of Barnstaple. It will be remembered that the Governor had long before made provision for the contingency of the withdrawal of the garrison within the Castle and Fort. None of Blake's biographers has mentioned his engagement in this particular service. There is a passage in Pepys's Diary in which Pepys gives us a short

¹ Printed in the tract *Sir Thomas Fairfaxes Letter, &c.*, published by order of Parliament, London, 6 April, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccliv.

² Letter of "N. J.," printed in the tract, *The Agreement for the Surrender of the City of Exeter, &c.*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cclvi.

dissertation by Mr. Coventry, an acute observer of mankind for whose opinions the Diarist had a marked respect, on the two different kinds of valour—active and passive—in which it is remarked that Blake's was wholly of the latter kind. It is doubtful if this judgment is borne out by the after-career of the Admiral; but, be this as it may, the unexplained failure of Blake's action before Barnstaple is certainly not the least interesting discovery made in the researches for this work.

Fairfax had reached Okehampton, on the 27th of March, a little in advance of his army, which came up on the following day. From Okehampton Colonel Sheffield's regiment of Horse and seven companies of Major-General Skippon's regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Ashfield, were detached on the 28th, without any delay therefore, "to assist at the blocking up of Barnstaple."¹ The main body of the army continued its march to Crediton. The investment of Exeter was completed, and the Governor, Sir John Berkeley, on a summons from Sir Thomas Fairfax, at once agreed to a treaty, with a view to a surrender, on the 1st of April.

I can find but few details of what took place around Barnstaple during the next ten days, after the coming in of the further reinforcement to the ranks of the besiegers; but some considerable events were happening, which are mentioned with provoking brevity in the contemporary notices. On one of

¹ Skippon himself had not yet rejoined the army, the veteran not having recovered from wounds received at Naseby.

these days there was a sally from the town, the result of which is stated to have been that forty of the garrison were taken prisoners.¹ Ilfracombe Castle, which, it may be presumed, had been occupied by a small Royalist garrison since its capture by General Goring in 1644, was stormed and taken by Colonel Sheffield, the party being led on by "Lieutenant-Colonel Harris."² The man-of-war fitted out by the Corporation of Barnstaple at the beginning of the troubles, and which had successively passed into the power of the possessors of the town for the time being, was captured at sea by one of Admiral Penn's squadron—"Captain Plunket's ship [she was the *Discovery*, hired merchantman of 34 guns,] hath taken a small Man-of-War with six guns of Barnstaple."³

The siege of Barnstaple, which had already lasted five weeks, had been, so far, little more than a blockade; and now there was no longer any reason why it should not be pressed to extremity. There is not a word said, however, of the employment of artillery against the works; although a long course

¹ *The Moderate Intelligencer*, No. 58, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cclvii.

² *Several Letters to the Hon. William Lenthall, Esq., Speaker, &c.*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cclvii. There was no officer of the name of Harris in Fairfax's army; probably *Harrison*—Thomas Harrison, the fanatic, who acted afterwards in the famous historical scene of the Dismissal of the Rump Parliament; condemned and executed as a regicide after the Restoration. The President of the United States of America (1889) is said to be a lineal descendant of his.

³ *The Kingdom's Weekly Intelligencer*, April 7-13, 1646, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cclvii.

of the contemporary news-literature leads me to be cautious in inferring that no artillery was therefore used. There had been ample time in the interval for bringing up some of the field-guns which we know had been in action at Tiverton, which had been too late to be of service at the taking of Dartmouth, and which had been left behind when the army advanced from Crediton to Chulmleigh. Of siege-guns, in the modern sense, there does not appear to have been any with the army at the time. The Comptroller of the Ordnance, Captain Richard Deane, had returned with the General from Cornwall; and it may be conjectured that to him would now be assigned the direction of the operations against the defences of Barnstaple; he had served within the town, and had the advantage of personally knowing their reverse side.¹ There are supposed traces of entrenched approaches on the rising slope a little to the east of the Great Fort, and of apparently a two-gun battery fronting it, indicative, it may be, of a prepared attack on that formidable work. But we know at present so little of the actual details of this or, indeed, of any stage of the siege, that it would be rash to form from the foregoing data even a notion of what took place; and there is no localized tradition whatever to help us.

Several days were occupied in settling the articles of the capitulation of Exeter, which were ultimately signed on the 9th, and the city was to be given up on the 13th, the Monday following. The surrender seems to have been a foregone conclusion; for Secre-

¹ See p. 280.

tary Nicholas, writing to the Marquess of Ormonde on the 26th of March (five days, therefore, before Fairfax's summons was received), says—"Pendennis Castle and Barnstaple are the only holds we now have in the West; and it cannot be expected we should have them long, there being no visible relief for them in this kingdom."¹

To make the best use of the intervening time, and doubtless calculating upon the effect which Sir John Berkeley's surrender would have upon the resolution of Sir Allen Apsley, Fairfax, accompanied by his Secretary, Mr. Rushworth, came from his head-quarters at Tiverton to the leaguer before Barnstaple on the evening of Friday the 10th of April. "I am going," he had written to his father Lord Fairfax on the preceding day, "to Barnstable, which, I have good hopes, will come in on a summons. Then the western war, I trust in the Lord, is finished."²

On the same evening, Fairfax sent in his summons to the garrison and, says Sprigge, "received a civill Answer from the Governour, inclining to a Treaty which began the next day, and held all that day, and part of the day following."³ The progress of the treaty does not seem to have been so rapid as the impatience of the General desired. Moreover, he was anxious, it appears, to return to be present at the evacuation of Exeter on the following Monday. The treaty "held dispute till Sunday" the 12th, with

¹ Carte's *Life of Ormonde*, iii. 453.

² Bell's *Memorials of the Civil War*, i. 290.

³ *Anglia Rediviva*, ed. 1647, p. 243; ed. 1854, p. 250.

the result thus described in a contemporary letter written from Tiverton on the following day :—

. . . And then the Generall being resolved not to loosetime, sent in a summons to Sir *Allen Apsley* the Governour, with a Copy of the Articles whereupon Exeter was surrendred, requiring the speedy rendition of Barnstable on the same tearmes, or else to let them know that he would admit no more delays, but forthwith fall on, which he was resolved to do, if the Governour had not sent an Answer of satisfaction. But there was an agreement made that night. [The Articles, the writer explains, are the same, with some obvious exceptions, as those of Exeter.] So *Barnstable* surrenders tomorrow [the 14th], they are to deliver up the Towne and Castle with all therein, according as is exprest in the afore-said *Articles*, and to remaine in the fort only, and after eight dayes, they are to surrender the fort also, and for performance of these articles, they are to give hostages immediatly, any two, whomsoever the Generalls Excellency shall make choyce of, the Governour and Deputy Governour only excepted, and they are to have liberty to send to *Oxford* to know His Majesties pleasure, [a customary hollow device to save the honour of the garrison], and have an answer if it may bee within the eight dayes, for they are to remaine there no longer in the Fort, and for those who are to march away when they doe goe, I believe they will not much exceed one hundred." ¹

I infer from the small number of the garrison that was expected by the writer of this account to retire, for a stipulated period of respite, to their last stronghold the Great Fort, that this remnant was

¹ From a letter printed in *Barnstable agreed to be Surrendred*. London: Printed for Matthew Walbancke at Grays-Inn-Gate, 16 April, 1646. A tract in my own possession.

composed of the Cavalier officers and soldiers who had originally come from other parts of the kingdom ; it can scarcely have meant the whole of the garrison. Those who were Devonians or Cornishmen, and possibly others as well, doubtless elected to be then and there disbanded, or to take service in the Parliamentary army.

Many spurious copies of the Articles of the last surrender of Barnstaple are to be met with in the contemporary literature. I am able to give this historical document in its genuine form :—

Articles of Agreement betweene Sir Thomas Fairfax Knight, Generall of the Parliaments Army, and Sir Allen Apsley Knight, Governour of the Garrison of Barnstaple, as followeth :—

I.

That all Officers and Souldiers, without exception of any persons whatsoever, and all other persons within the Garrison and Forts, may have leave to march forth both Horse and Foot, with their compleat Arms, flying Colours, Matches lighted, with their Muskets laden, and twelve shot apiece in their Bandaliers, with the like proportion to the Troopers, for their Carbines, and Pistolls, to any Garrison in England, where His Majesty shall bee in person, and that they shall have a safe Conduct to the same and free quarter in their March, and be not forced to march above ten miles a day.

II.

That in case they shal not be received by the King, they shall have free leave to passe quietly to their owne homes.

III.

That no Gentlemen, Clergiemen, Officers, Citizens, or Souldiers, or other persons comprized within these Articles, shall bee questioned or accountable for any Act past, or by them done, or by any other by their procurement, relating unto the unhappy differences between His Majestie, and the Parliament, they submitting themselves to reasonable and moderate Composition for their estates, which the Generall Sir *Thomas Fairfax* shall really endeavour with the Parliament, that it shall not exceed two yeares value of any man's reall estate respectively, and for personall according to the ordinary rule, not exceeding the proportion aforesaid, which Composition being made they shall have indemnity for their persons, and enjoy their estates and all other immunities.

IV.

That no Oath, Covenant, Protestation, or Subscription (relating thereunto) shall be imposed upon any person whatsoever comprized within these articles, but only such as shall bind all persons aforesaid, not to beare armes against the Parliament of England now sitting at Westminster ; nor wilfully do any act prejudiciall unto their affaires, whilst they remaine in their Quarters, except the persons aforesaid shall first render themselves unto the Parliament, who shall cause them to be secured, if they think fit.

V.

That all persons comprized in these Articles shall have leave to continue in the Parliaments quarters for the space of foure months, or to go beyond Sea at any time in the said space of foure months, with such goods as they have now in their possession, both parties engaging themselves as before.

VI.

That any Officers, or others comprized in these Articles, not exceeding the number of eight persons, shall have free leave to go to Oxford, or to any other place where the King shall be, and to returne to their owne homes at any time, or where else they please.

VII.

That all goods now in possession, or of right belonging to any within the Garrison, may have a free protection for their safetie, and leave either to send them beyond the Seas, or to any place within the Kingdome, within three months after the surrender of the same.

VIII.

That the towne be not plundred, or fired, and that both they, and all other persons comprized within these articles, shall enjoy the benefit of such articles as were granted by the Generall to them at Exon.

IX.

That such goods as shall be remaining in either of the Forts at the surrender thereof, which belong to any in the towne, shall be restored to the severall Owners.

X.

That such Prisoners of ours, belonging to the Garrison, which have been taken since the beginning of the Siege, may be forthwith released, and enjoy the benefit of these articles.

XI.

That the Castle and towne, with all the Ordnance, ammunition, and other warlike provisions therein, be

surrendred to Sir THOMAS FAIRFAX, Generall of the Parliaments Army, or to whom he shall appoynt, on Tuesday the 14 of this instant April.

XII.

That the Fort with the Ordnance, ammunition, spare armes, and all other warlike provisions therein, be surrendred to Sir THOMAS FAIRFAX, Generall of the Parliaments Army, or to whom he shall appoynt, on Munday the 20 of this Instant, by twelve of the clock at Noone.

XIII.

That there be a Cessation of armes during these eight dayes following; the Souldiers of both sides continuing within the limits agreed between Sir Allen Apsley, and Lieutenant-Colonell Ashfield: and that such Souldiers as shall come away during the eight dayes, shall not be entertained, but may be sent back againe.

XIV.

That the sick and wounded Souldiers belonging to Sir Allen Apsley, may have libertie to continue in their Quarters at Barnstaple, till they recover their health, care being taken for them on that behalfe, and then to have Passes to returne to their Colours, or to their homes, at their choyce.¹

Such, then, so far as I have been able to recover the details, were the last siege and surrender of Barnstaple. The result in a military sense was

¹ *Four strong Castles taken by the Parliaments Forces, &c.* "The copie of the Articles for the surrender of Barnstaple." London: Printed for Matthew Walbancke at Grayes Inn Gate, April 27, 1646. King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cclviii.

perhaps inglorious, but it was doubtless heartily welcomed by the inhabitants who, during the blockade had been necessarily subjected to privations of which no account has survived. On Tuesday the 14th of April, the Castle and town were duly given up. Sir Allen Apsley and the remnant of the garrison continued in the Great Fort, according to the Articles, until the following Tuesday, when (as nothing to the contrary is recorded) they may be assumed to have passed out of it with the full credentials of an honourable capitulation. Colonel Sheffield had been left behind by the General to see the Articles performed.

In the tabular statement at the end of Sprigge's book, which as I have already had occasion to remark contains some particulars which do not occur in the body of the work, the siege is represented as having lasted thirty days. If the commencement of the blockade was the commencement of the siege it must be taken from the 20th of February, according to Sprigge's own statement; and from that date to the time of the surrender are to be reckoned forty-nine days. If Sprigge made the tabulated record advisedly, it must mean that nearly three weeks had elapsed before Colonel Cook seriously invested Barnstaple, and the blockade became a formal siege. In the same "Table" the number of "slain" of the garrison is put as "20." If we add to this return the usual proportion of wounded, a considerable amount of fighting, first and last, is indicated for which the scanty details of the siege have certainly not prepared us. Further-

more this record states that thirty-five pieces of ordnance and four hundred arms were taken.

While the treaty for the surrender of Barnstaple was going on, Sir Thomas Fairfax stayed at Tawstock House, the Earl of Bath's residence, from which after the surrender he duly wrote to the Parliament a letter, so far as I am aware not preserved, reporting the event. The House of Commons showed its sense of the importance of the news and the gratification with which it was received by ordering "That Mr. Standish who brought the Letter concerning the Rendition of Barnstaple from the General shall have one hundred pounds bestowed upon him for his Pains."¹

The surrender of Barnstaple practically finished the campaign in the West, and released the army of Sir Thomas Fairfax for the final operations which brought this war to a close. Two isolated forts in Cornwall and Devon respectively—Pendennis Castle and Fort Charles, at Salcombe—alone continued to hold out, and small detachments were left to reduce them at leisure. The completion of a brilliant series of military successes was received everywhere with exultation by the Parliamentary party. The goal which promised so much for freedom when in anticipation, but which proved such a Dead-Sea apple when realized, was not far off. In the river Shannon, Admiral Penn, who was operating there with a squadron against the Irish rebels, was noting in his diary that Captain Southwood in a small frigate came in and "told us that Exeter and

¹ *Journals of the House of Commons*, 15^o Aprilis, 1646, iv. 510.

Barnstaple were taken together with divers other places : for which good news God make us thankful ! " ¹ The 12th of May was set apart by Parliament as a day of Solemn Thanksgiving for the regaining and "taking in" of several garrisons—Barnstaple and Ilfracombe being bracketed with others in the category. At St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, the Rev. Sam. Torshel preached before the House of Commons. His sermon on the text—*Righteousness exalteth a Nation*—a tedious, diffuse, judaical rhapsody, in which there was the least possible allusion to the particular occasion, was printed under the title of *The Palace of Justice opened and set to view*, and may still be read by the curious. One act of "righteousness" which the Puritan divine meekly suggested to his Honourable hearers in the hour of their triumph was that they should not spare the sword in their dealings with the prostrate Royalists !

Here the limit which I have set to this relation bids me stop. But, before concluding, there are some occurrences, subsequent in point of time but connected, in whatever may be their interest, with what has gone before, which may be noticed by way of postscript.

Before the end of the month in which Barnstaple reverted to the Parliament, King Charles was a fugitive. A few months later he was a prisoner in the power of that army which in Devonshire and

¹ *Memorials of Sir W. Penn*, 1833, i. 177.

Cornwall had swept away his last means of resisting the popular rebellion. Rival factions, such as inevitably rise to the surface of a successful revolution, contended for predominance. The moderate section of the Parliament, content with the ground which had been won in the cause of the people's liberties, were "secluded" and suppressed by a junto which, after condemning the King to the executioner's block, paved the way for a military and, what was worse, a fanatical despotism. In March, 1649, the Town Clerk of Barnstaple had to read at the High Cross the proclamation which declared that kingly government in England was dissolved.

No garrison, or if any a very small one, seems to have been left in Barnstaple when the Parliamentary forces retired; although one Major Roberts, of whom nothing is known, is stated to have been temporarily appointed Governor.¹ In the following February, by a resolution of the House of Commons, the town was to be "disgarrisoned and the works slighted."²

Sir Allen Apsley went to Nottingham, and for a time was the guest of his Puritan sister and her husband, Colonel John Hutchinson, the governor of the Parliamentary garrison of that town. There, by a singular chance, he again met his former opponent, Sir Thomas Fairfax, who visited Nottingham, and was on terms of friendly intercourse with the Hutchinsons. Sir Allen did not lose his connection with Devonshire. Probably, during the time when

¹ *Sir Thomas Fairfax's Further Proceedings in the West, &c.*, King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cclvij.

² *Journals of the House of Commons*, 25^o Februarii, 1646 [*i.e.*, 1647], v. xcviij.

he was Lieutenant-Governor of Exeter, he had had leisure for the softer passions. It must have been not long after his surrender of Barnstaple that he married Elizabeth, the only daughter and heiress of John Peter, Esq. (who died in 1643), of Bowhay, in the parish of Exminster. After the Restoration, Sir Allen held the office of Falconer to the King, a sinecure which has lately, by its unjustifiable vitality, provoked discussion. He was also Almoner to the Duke of York, and M.P. for Thetford in 1661. He died in 1683, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. A little time before his death he published a long poem, entitled, *Order and Disorder, being Meditations on the Creation and Fall*, which has long since passed into oblivion. Catherine, the granddaughter and ultimate heiress of Sir Allen Apsley and his Devonshire wife, married her cousin Allen, first Lord Bathurst. From them descended the Lord Chancellor Bathurst, who built the well-known Apsley House, at Hyde Park Corner, and the present Earl Bathurst, whose second title is Baron Apsley. One of the daughters of the first Lord and Lady Bathurst became the wife of Mr. Buller of Downes, Devon, and was the mother of the celebrated Judge Buller.

The pacification of Devonshire brought into active operation the standing Committee of the county for the sequestration, under the powers given by successive ordinances of Parliament, of the estates, real and personal, of those Royalists who, by a large and comprehensive definition, came under the denomination of "Delinquents." It included all who had been in arms or had raised or contributed money

or other aid against the Parliament, or had injured any who had willingly yielded obedience to the Parliament; all who had joined in any oath or association, or imposed or levied any tax or assessment towards the maintenance of any forces, against the Parliament. Afterwards, it was extended to those who voluntarily absented themselves from their usual places of abode, dwelling, trade, offices, or employment, and had gone to any of the King's armies or forces raised without the consent of Parliament, and to those who fraudulently should embezzle, conceal, or convey away their goods, money, or estate. The Committee of sequestrators, which in Devonshire consisted mostly of gentry of the highest standing in the county, had the largest powers to seize the lands, rents, &c., of the delinquents and debts due to them, and to sell their goods. They were to allow not more than one-fifth for the maintenance of the wives and children. Papists, without exception, were to surrender two-thirds of their estates. These powers were at first carried out apparently with less zeal than was expected by the Parliament, and repeated instructions were issued to stimulate the activity of the Committees. It is generally thought that the gentry, so long as they were predominant on the Committees, felt some reluctance to interfere with the landed property of their neighbours notwithstanding their political differences. But the actual work was soon relegated to less scrupulous agents of a lower class. The changes which took place in consequence of these political confiscations in the holdings of a large

portion of the landed property of the kingdom, and in the means and ultimate social position of its owners, were enormous. All these transactions were controlled by a Central Committee of Lords and Commons sitting permanently at Goldsmiths' Hall, London, whose records are still preserved. The option was allowed of compounding for estates thus sequestered; and this composition, when effected, was generally at two years' purchase; in other words, by the payment of a lump sum equal to two years' rental. Those who were disposed to believe in the permanency of the new order of government, and despaired of any relief from the incubus which sat upon their lands, accepted the alternative, and with much trouble to themselves had to go personally to London and submit to an inquisitorial inspection of their rent-rolls, family settlements, and so forth, by the Central Committee. It is understood that these proceedings were carried out with an affected regard to justice and legality; and certainly the papers which exist show an attention to form and detail which may be termed bureaucratic. The composition was in reality an enormous fine, and is often called a fine. An avenue was left open for an appeal to the clemency of the Parliament, as we gather from one of the articles of the surrender of Barnstaple. A well-known little book, printed in the year 1655, professes to contain a *Catalogue of the Lords, Knights, and Gentlemen, that have Compounded for their Estates*. This is not a complete list, but it is the only one available without much special research. Very few of the landowners of North Devon appear

in this list; their names may be of interest to some one, and I append them with the amount of compositions which they paid respectively.

	£	s.	d.
Bath Henry, Earl of	693	0	9
Basset Arth. of Underseigh [Umberleigh]	1,321	6	6
Cholwell William, Alwington	180		
Carew Thos. Studley, Esq.	750		
Courtney John of Molland, Esq.	750		
Cary Tho. of Torrington	20		
Cotton Edward, Shobroo [Shobroke] Cler	288		
Cutnie Archer, Bampton, Gent.	83	10	
Chic[h]ester Henry, Bittadon	7	1	8
Cary Robert, Clovelly	25	0	4
Davy John, Barington [Burrington?]	20		
Gifford John of Brightly, Esq.	1,136		
Hancock Joh. Combmartin, Esq.	420		
Jermyn John, Werkley [Warkleigh?] Gent	112		
Milton William, Sheepwash, Gent.	76	10	
Muncke Thomas, Portlinch [Potheridge?] Esq.	300		
Pine Edward of East-down	[a blank]		
Pointz Edward Junior, Barnstable	45		
Stukely Thomas, Affton, Gent	300		
Sydenham Sir Ralphe, Youlston	500		
Smith Richard, Torrington, Merchant	176		
Slowly John, Fremington, Gent.	138		
Yeo George, Huish, Esq.	327	5	

The occurrence of the name of Colonel Arthur Basset (or, as he wrote his own name, Bassett) in this list suggests an inquiry into the statement made by Prince, the author of the *Worthies of Devon*, that he was "made governour of Barnstaple for the King,"¹ and

¹ Ed. 1810, p. 53.

implying (although there is some ambiguity in this part of the paragraph) that he held the post at the time of the final surrender of the town to Fairfax. Gribble (*Memorials of Barnstaple*, p. 456), adopting from an unmentioned and, to him, unknown narrator a passage which turns out to be a mere garbled extract from Prince, assumes that this was so. The Rev. Thomas Moore, in the biographical portion of his *History of Devonshire* (ii. 508), referring to Colonel Basset, states categorically that "at the commencement of the Civil War, having joined the royal party, he was made Colonel in the King's army and Governor of Barnstaple;" thus carrying the ambiguity a little further. After considerable research I am bound to say that I have not found a single particle of evidence that Colonel Basset was, at any time, Governor of Barnstaple; whereas the evidence to the contrary is all but conclusive. Both Gribble and Moore were betrayed, in my judgment, into unwarrantable glosses of the ambiguous statement made by Prince. Neither at the commencement nor at the end of the Civil War could Colonel Basset have held the post of Governor of Barnstaple. For, in the first place, in the twelve months after the town was first garrisoned it was never for a moment in the hands of the Royalist party; and, that being so, it is almost unnecessary to remark that Colonel Basset was for a great portion of that time a prisoner in London. In the second place, for many months down to the final surrender of the town to Fairfax, not only is it matter of history that Sir Allen Apsley was the governor, but, as shown by Colonel Basset's own

composition papers,¹ he was shut up in Exeter and afterwards claimed the benefit of the articles of the capitulation of Exeter—not of Barnstaple. The petitioner in those curious and interesting documents had to recite his own “delinquency”; and although Colonel Basset admitted that he was “Commissioner (amongst others) for the county of Devon, on his Majesty’s behalf, in raising forces against the forces of the Parliament,” he made no mention, which he would probably have done, of his having been governor of a fortified town for the King.

It rests therefore on the unsupported and bare statement made by Prince whether or not Colonel Basset was actually—it could have been only for a very brief time—governor during any intermediate period when Barnstaple was in the Royalists’ occupation, and of this, as I have said, there is no evidence whatever. It is a fact that after the Restoration, Colonel Basset, who was of course associated to some extent with Barnstaple by his property and near residence, besides being one of its magistrates, was commandant of the trained-band of the town, and this may have misled the author of the *Worthies*. Colonel Arthur Basset, of Heanton Court, has been frequently confounded with Sir Arthur Basset of the Cornish branch of the family, who was also engaged on the King’s side in the Civil War.

The greatest sufferers, perhaps, from the wholesale confiscations made by the now dominant party in the State were the contumacious clergy. Those who accepted the Covenant and conformed to the Presby-

¹ Royalist Compositions, Record Office, 2nd Series, xxxvi. 363–381.

terian formula were generally able to retain their livings, and these were probably the majority. Those who did not were ejected. A fifth of the income was reserved for the maintenance of the family of the ejected minister, although not always paid by the Puritan preacher who supplanted him. A well-known work was compiled with great industry in the beginning of the eighteenth century by the Rev. John Walker, M.A., Rector of St. Mary Major, Exeter, giving an account of the sufferings of these ejected clergy during and after the Civil War, and the victims in Devonshire occupy naturally a large place. It was not so much for his doctrinal perversities, for he was not a High Churchman,¹ as for his political delinquency, that the Rev. Martin Blake, B.D., Vicar of Barnstaple, came under the heavy hand of the Committee. Martin Blake is best known to the present generation by the curious and elaborate monument, now in the south chancel aisle of the parish church, which, in the midst of trouble—" *utrimque coarctatus*," as the allusion to himself in the pathetic inscription has it—he raised to the memory of a beloved son and four other children. Besides a sermon which he printed after the Restoration, Blake, during the military occupation of Barnstaple in 1645, and in the midst of the distractions of the time, found opportunity to print in London a treatise on one of the subjects over which the divines of those days consumed their

¹ He had had scruples about taking the oath imposed by the Convocation in 1640. See his letter in the Tanner MSS., Bodleian Library, lxv. 199.

midnight oil.¹ Throughout the whole of the period over which this relation has extended his name has not once occurred, and it might be inferred that he took no active part whatever in local affairs. No sooner, however, was the Parliamentary authority re-established than it was remembered that he had used his influence to procure the surrender of the town to Prince Maurice (in 1643), and that, being (as it was supposed) a native of Plymouth, he had written to the authorities there, counselling them to submit to the King's authority, and offering his own services for that end. In Walker's *Sufferings* is a long account of the persecution to which Blake was now subjected. Of this I can only give an abstract. Blake's greatest enemy was one Tooker, whom he had befriended. Alas! for the credit of human nature, that this sequence should seem so familiar. This man "solicited" a petition against him, the main accusation in which was the Plymouth letter. Blake was summoned to answer it

¹ *The Great Question so much insisted on by some Touching Scandalous Christians as yet not legally convicted; whether or no they may be lawfully admitted by the Minister, or communicated with by the people at the Lord's Table. The Affirmative maintained by way of Answer to a Discourse of Mr. B. Coxe.* By Martin Blake, B.D., and V. of B., in Devon, in the behalfe of himself and his Parishioners whom Mr. B. Coxe hath secretly laboured to draw them into the contrary opinion. London: printed for the Author, &c., 1645. King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. ccxxv. Mr. B. Coxe was the stipendiary Lecturer of the Corporation. The tractate had been written, Blake says in his preface, and a copy delivered to Mr. Coxe before the outbreak of the war. The printing was delayed by a "small parcell of Copy by negligence of the Printer being lost; the Author dwelling farre distant and the waies so troublesome, it could not sooner bee supplied."

before the Grand Committee for the West in London, in May, 1646. A counter petition was got up at Barnstaple in Blake's favour. Tooker's petition was then, somehow, dropped, and Blake was ordered to appear before the Committee at Exeter, whither he repaired, accompanied by several of the town, who brought another petition on his behalf, signed by the Corporation and a majority of the inhabitants—almost the whole town. He was now charged, in yet another petition, that he was an enemy to godliness; had betrayed Barnstaple to the King and endeavoured the same at Plymouth; and that the good people of Barnstaple could receive no comfort or benefit by his ministry. Sir Hardress Waller, a Puritan, then commanding in Devonshire, wrote to the Committee in Blake's favour, declaring that he had received spiritual comfort from him, and had observed his great zeal to God's people, and assuring the Committee that Blake was singularly gifted and truly and powerfully godly. Notwithstanding this testimonial, Blake was voted a delinquent and suspended, and the town was without a minister for the next twelve months. In the mean time "a great and pestilential sickness brake out in the town." Blake had retired into the country. The town then "renew their instances" to the Committee, representing their double misery for want of a minister at such a season, and suggest that no one would then come into such an infected place, but that their old minister would gladly return. The reply was that Mr. Blake was not to preach any more in Barnstaple. In 1647, his sus-

pension was by some means cancelled; upon which he was recalled, and resumed his ministry for the next eight years—not however without “the cumbrance of a factious Lecturer one Hanmer, whom they thrust upon him and with whom he was forced to bear, lest they should a second time get him dispossessed of his living, as they did afterwards, notwithstanding his compliance” — which probably implies that he had taken the Covenant. This “factious” lecturer was the Rev. Jonathan Hanmer, a native of Barnstaple, and at that time vicar of the adjoining parish of Bishop’s Tawton, from which living he was ejected by the Act of Uniformity in 1662. Although therefore, obviously, a strong Puritan, and afterwards, in fact, the founder of a Nonconformist congregation, it is asserted by Gribble that, so far from Mr. Hanmer being obnoxious to Mr. Blake, “these two amiable men lived on terms of the greatest harmony.”¹ About the year 1655, when the Episcopal clergy were again subjected to persecution, Blake was once more inhibited from preaching, and afterwards dispossessed of his living; Nathaniel Mather, a Nonconformist, who had graduated at Harvard College, New England, being installed in his place.² In 1657, Blake went to London to seek redress, and obtained an order from Cromwell to continue in possession of his vicarage until the Law should try

¹ *Memorials*, p. 502.

² He was an elder brother of Increase Mather, the eminent Puritan divine of New England and a voluminous writer, and was himself a theologian of some note. He went to Holland at the Restoration, and left no record at Barnstaple.

his case. Notwithstanding which, it seems that a party of Horse was sent to dispossess him, broke open his house—"even that vicarage house which he had at great charge built anew from the ground"—and hurried him a prisoner to Exeter in a very bitter, stormy winter's day. He refused to resign, insisting that he had not been sequestered, was dismissed and returned to his family—"but so much weakened with travel and sorrow that he came home in a very sickly condition and was never repossessed of his vicarage until the Restoration."¹

So much—and perhaps too much—of Martin Blake. His case is no doubt a typical one, and at least is of some local interest. He lived as vicar of Barnstaple for thirteen years after his final reinstatement, and died in 1673. The vicarage-house, mentioned in the foregoing account of his troubles as having been built by him, is still standing; it has apparently been subjected to but little alteration, and has been occupied by the successive vicars down to the present time.

After War—Pestilence. The last Royalist soldier had scarcely left Barnstaple when the plague broke out in the town, and the ill-fated inhabitants were overwhelmed by a calamity compared with which the worst sufferings of the siege were insignificant. The visitation was not peculiar to Barnstaple, nor was it the first of its kind. The year 1646, however, was a plague-year of exceptional severity. Most of the towns in Devonshire were infected, and through-

¹ *Sufferings of the Clergy, &c.*, by the Rev. John Walker, M.A., 1714, pt. ii. p. 194.

out the summer the epidemic prevailed over the greater part of England. In London, in July, there was the customary order issued for the shutting-up of the houses of those infected, and the red cross and pious deprecation, "Lord, have mercy upon us!" were painted on the front doors. The Rev. Richard Wood's "Journal" notices that "the great plague," as he calls it, began in Barnstaple in April.¹ Another notice, quoted by Gribble, is that the "great sickness" began in May.² In the month of September, the election of the Mayor took place in the open air, presumably to avoid the danger of infection which the assembly of a number of persons in the Guildhall would have caused. In the County Sessions at Exeter the magistrates ordered that "the Town of Barnstaple being infected with the plague, none of the inhabitants were to be entertained in any of the neighbouring parishes; if they do, to be bound to the sessions and their houses shut up."³ It is strange that a calamity of such dimensions as this seems to have been should have left so slight a record behind it. The parish register of burials is silent, not having been kept between April, 1643, and July, 1647. But a record quoted by Gribble, as usual without any reference, states that 1,500 died of the plague—out of a population of between four and five thousand. Incredible as this may seem, it is quite supported by a more certainly accredited fact. The population of the suburban parish of Pilton could

¹ Chanter's *Literary History of Barnstaple*, p. 120.

² *Memorials of Barnstaple*, p. 630.

³ Harding MSS.

scarcely have numbered more than 1,000 at that time; the register of the parish has this special entry in the year 1646:—

Moreover there dyed in the Plague and Pestilence this year theis following

[Here follow 276 names.]

Moreover there dyed at the Pesthouse Fourteene psonses whose names are not here inscribed.

With reference to this period, a remarkable tract with an obviously religious, or rather sectarian, purpose is extant. It is now only redeemed by its local allusions from its vulgarity and worthlessness, which are those of a halfpenny street-ballad; yet it was printed in London, and doubtless had a considerable circulation, as it seems to have reached a second edition. From a manuscript note in the copy in the Library of the British Museum² it appears to have been issued just before August in the year of the plague. The title runs as follows: "Five Wonders seene in England, Two at *Barnstable*, one at *Kirkham*, one in *Cornwall*, one in *Little Britain* in *London*. In all which places *Whereby Gods Judgements are miraculously seene upon some*. Severall Miraculous Accidents have hapned to the Amazement of all those that have beene eye-witnesses thereof. *The second impression with additions, and Certificate from those who were eye witnesses thereof. Published according to Order.* London. Printed by J. C. 1646."

² King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. cclxxiii.

Wonder No. 1 is thus certified :—

A Copie of a Paper which came from *Exeter*, inclosed in a Letter to an Eminent Officer of that Garrison (a very honest Godly man) now in LONDON.

That the Sicknesse being for a long time very tedious in *Barnstable*, some honest people met together twice a weeke, to pray the Lord for the removing of his hand of Visitation from the Towne, some disturbed them, and crying out they were *INDEPENDANTS*, Saying they were the cause of the Plague being amongst them, threatning to turne them out of their Towne, this did not disharten the honest people, but they continued still in prayer, and divers of the other people went from the house (where they had abused them, throwing stones and railing on them) to their owne dwellings, and immediately fell sick of the Plague, and they and all their families dyed of the Plague within one weeke, which causeth most of the people of the Towne, to speake well of the honest partie, and to take notice of the hand of God on the other. And which is to be observed, not one family of those railed against had not, neither hath as yet, had any sicknesse amongst them, though it hath been on each hand next dore to them.

Wonder No. 2, a revolting incident of the plague, but no wonder at all, is unfit for reproduction. The writer continues : “ *And all this is justified by the Deputie governour of Barnstable, besides the confirmation of many more honest people of that Town. So say the Letters from Exeter (which is all I can say of it).* ” The anti-climax of this concluding passage amusing.

In this year, 1646, the House of Commons having become considerably attenuated by the repeated

ejections of the less thorough-going republicans, many new members, nicknamed "Recruiters," were called up by not very regular processes of election. The vacancies in the representation of the borough of Barnstaple caused by George Peard's death and Richard Ferris's disablement were then filled up—the former by Major-General Philip Skippon; the latter by a native of the town, John Doddridge, a nephew of Judge Doddridge, and afterwards Recorder of Bristol and Barnstaple.

It would seem that in 1647, when the distresses caused by the plague may be supposed to have been somewhat alleviated, the Corporation of Barnstaple were laying before the House of Commons their claim to the reimbursement of the costs to which they had been put for the fortification of the town, and for which both Houses of Parliament had solemnly given their indemnity. It was probably at this time that the "Summarie of Disbursements," which I have found so useful in its historical application, was prepared. The issue of the business, so far as is known, is summed up in the following Order of the House of Commons:—

25^o Januarii 1647 [*i.e.*, 1648]. Ordered That M^r W^m Palmer, late Mayor of Barnstable, be referred to the Committee for taking the Accompts of the whole Kingdom; to audit, state, and certify the Accompts of the Town.¹

This did not go very far in the way of a satisfaction of the claims of the Corporation, and, as has

¹ *Journals of the House of Commons*, v. 442.

been already stated, they were apparently never even compounded for.

The few Parliamentary troops maintained in Devonshire after the pacification were under the command of Sir Hardress Waller, whose headquarters were at Exeter. An outlying detachment, under a lieutenant, was quartered for a time at Barnstaple and appears to have been the cause of a great deal of annoyance there. In April, 1648, in reference to a complaint made to Parliament of these proceedings, whatever they were, the General was promptly requested to send for the lieutenant "who with his Souldiers took Free Quarter about Barnstaple and to examine the business and do Justice to the Country." In the result of this affair, "the House passed a new Ordinance for taking away Free Quarter"¹—a grievance which, apparently, since the termination of hostilities, had been the subject of reiterated complaint from the "well-affected" in various parts of the country. There is an item in the *Records* which is explained by this transaction: "Paid Tucker for expenses of a horse in a journey to Exon about the taking off the troops, 10s. 11d."²

The year 1648 was marked by the reactionary disturbances which ushered in what is usually called the Second Civil War. There was a rising of Royalists in Pembrokeshire, which Cromwell went down and with some difficulty suppressed. Another was the Kent insurrection, led by the Earl of Norwich (father of Lord Goring), Lord Capel, and

¹ Whitelock's *Memorials*, ed. 1632, p. 301.

² No. lxvii.

Sir Charles Lucas, who threw themselves into Colchester, where, after a terrible siege, they surrendered to the forces of the Commonwealth. For the part taken in this affair, Lord Capel, whose previous career in the West we have partly followed, was subsequently beheaded in Palace Yard. A more formidable affair was the revolt of the Scots and their coalition with the northern Royalists under the Duke of Hamilton. Hurrying to the scene from Wales, Cromwell defeated and dispersed them in the sanguinary battle and rout of Preston.

The King was all this while a close prisoner in Carisbrook Castle. The hope of the moderate section of the Parliament that an accommodation with him was still possible, fructified in yet another treaty which, like all the others, came to nothing. The person of the King was now a stumbling-block to Cromwell and the army. Even from Devonshire, petitions went up, signed by the inhabitants—gentlemen, ministers, &c., desiring justice upon the principal "Causers of the War." The meaning of this movement was clear, and the inevitable sequel was seen in the following January on the scaffold in front of Whitehall.

In the following year the turn of the Irish Royalists came. Barnstaple was one of the ports selected for the embarkation of troops for this sanguinary campaign. One Major Walters of Barnstaple, of whom little appears to be known, but who was afterwards one of the Members for the borough in the last Parliament of the Commonwealth, contracted to carry over five hundred

recruits; he raising, marching, and transporting them to the waterside at his own charge, and without disorder or free-quartering. As he was paid the money, it is to be presumed that he executed his part of the contract.¹ It is not mentioned whether or not the men were enlisted in North Devon; but that seems to be the obvious inference. The news of the terrible assault and capture of Tredah, or Drogheda, in which the whole garrison of some two thousand men were put to the sword—one of the “marvellous great mercies” vouchsafed to Cromwell’s army—was received at Barnstaple with effusive rejoicing.²

In this year, 1650, there occurs in the *Memorials* of Bulstrode Whitelock a paragraph, being a report of current news, which refers to what was probably the first commemoration at Barnstaple of the great Deliverance of the 1st of July. Without the explanation from local history the paragraph would be unintelligible:—

1650, July 2. From Barnstable of a design to destroy all the Parliament Party in that Town and thereabouts prevented by small means through the Mercy of God, was this day celebrated with great Solemnity.³

“Paid for 75 pounds of powder used on the 1st July £5”—is an item of the expenditure of the Corporation on this occasion.⁴

¹ *Calendar of State Papers: Domestic*—1650, p. 264.

² *Records*, No. lxviii.

³ *Memorials*, ed. 1682, p. 447.

⁴ *Records*, No. lxviii.

I do not find either in general history or in the local records, any other notice of moment relating to Barnstaple and its people during the Interregnum.

In the year 1655, there was a sudden but transient flurry in North Devon caused by one of the many petty Royalist insurrections which troubled the Cromwellian Government. Sir Joseph Wagstaff, Colonel John Penruddock, and Major Hugh Grove, Cavaliers and gentlemen of fortune and position, with several others, in Wiltshire, surprised Salisbury, and declared for Charles the Second. The success of the rising was never for a moment probable. The insurgents made off on the first appearance of the Protector's troopers, entered Devonshire, and were finally brought to bay at South Molton.

The fight which ensued has not, so far as I am aware, been described by any local writer, and is comparatively little known; although, as it were, only an after-clap of the great Civil War it is of so much local interest that an account of it, written by the actual commandant of the Commonwealth soldiers, may be appropriately inserted here. It is contained in two letters, printed in pamphlet form; the first of these, written in the very heat of the business by Captain Unton Crook, the officer mentioned, is as follows :—

Yesterday morning, being Tuesday, I marched with my Troop to Huninton, being fifteen miles Eastward from Exon, with intention to stop the Enemy from coming further Westward; but gaining intelligence that they were

come that way, and that they would be too strong for me, I made my retreat to Exon ; the next morning I understood that they were in their march for Cornwall, and in order thereunto they were come to Collumpton, within ten Miles of Exon, I heard they were much tyred, and their number two hundred, and therefore imagined that if they should gain Cornwall, it might be much prejudicial ; I was resolved to hazard all that was dear to me rather than let them have their End, and therfore marched towards Collumpton with only my own Troop, I had no more for this Service, but when I came near that place, I understood they were marched to Tiverton, whither I pursued them with all speed, but there mist them also, but received Information that from thence they were gone to Southmolton, twelve miles further, still in order for Cornwall ; thither I resolved to follow them ; they took up their quarters about seven of the Clock this night, and by the good providence of God directing and assisting me, I beat up their Quarters about ten of the Clock ; they disputed it very much with me in the Houses for more than two hours firing very hot out of the windows ; they shot seven or eight of my men, but none I hope mortally wounded, they shot many of my Horses also ; but, my Lord, we broke open many Houses ; some of them yielded to mercy ; I promised them I would use my endeavours to intercede for their lives, I have taken most of their Horses, about fifty Prisoners, amongst whom are Penruddock, Jones, and Grove, who commanded those Horse, each of them having a Troop. Wagstaff I fear is escaped, he was with them, but at present I cannot find him, yet hope to catch him as soon as Daylight appears. I will raise the Country to apprehend such Straglers, which for want of having Dragoons narrowlie escaped me. My Lord, they are all broken and routed, and I desire the Lord may have the glorie. I beseech your Highness to pardon this unpolisht account, I can hardly

indeed write, being so wearie with extream dutie, but I hope by the next to send your Highness a more perfect one, and a List of the Prisoners, many of them, I suppose being very considerable. Colonel Shapcot of this County was pleased to march with me at the beating up of their Quarters, and hath shewed himself wonderfull ready, in every respect, to preserve the Peace of this County. My Lord, I remain,

May it please your Highness,
Your most obedient and most humble servant,

UNTON CROOK.¹

From South Moulton

March 15. 1654 [*i.e.* 1655] about
two or three a clock in
the morning.

The second letter confirms and completes the story as told by Captain Crook :—

I gave your Highness last night an account how far I had pursued the Enemy that came out of Wiltshire into Devon ; I sent your Highness the numbers of them, which I conceived to be two hundred ; It pleased my good God so to strengthen & direct me, that although I had none but my *own Troop* which was not 60 that about ten a clock at night I fell into their quarters at a Town called South Molton, in the County of Devon ; I took, after four hours dispute with them in the Town, some 60 Prisoners, neer one hundred forty horse and arms. Wagstaff himself escaped, and I cannot yet find him, although I am still sending after him ;

¹ *A Letter to His Highness the Lord Protector From Captain Unton Croke, Signifying the total Defeat of the Cavaliers in the West, under the Command of Sir Joseph Wagstaffe.* Published by His Highness special Commandment. London, Printed by Henry Hills and John Field, Printers to His Highness, 1654 [*i.e.*, 1655]. King's Pamphlets, B. M., small 4tos, vol. dcxxxvij.

this party of them was divided into three Troops, Colonel Penruddock commanded one of them, and was to make it a Regiment, Colonel Groves commanded another, and was to compleat it to a Regiment, Col. Jones the third and was to do the like ; these 3 Gentlemen are of Wiltshire, and men of Estates. One of Sir Edward Clarks Sons was with them, he was to be Major to Penruddock, the Prisoners tell me that we killed him. I have brought all the Prisoners to Exon, and have delivered them over to the High Sheriff, who has put them into the High Gaol. Your Highness may be confident this Party is totally broken, there is not four men in a Company got away ; the Country surprize some of them hourly, the Maior of South Moulton, being with me in the Streets was shot in the body, but like to do well. I have nine or ten of my Troop wounded, I remain

Your Highness most obedient

Servant,

UNTON CROOK.¹

Exon Mar. 16. 1654 [*i.e.* 1655].

The insurrection against the *de facto* government had collapsed. Penruddock and Grove were arrested, tried at Exeter by Special Commission, and beheaded in the Castle yard. Others of the confederates were hanged at Heavitree.

It was this plot, in which a great number of Royalists were believed at the time to be implicated, that called from the Protector, in one of his speeches to the House of Commons, the exclamation—"I think England cannot be safe unless Malignants be carried far away!"² What followed was the institution of the domination by Major-Generals of dis-

¹ *A Second Letter*, &c., King's Pamphlets, B.M., small 4tos, vol. dcxxxvii.

² Carlyle's *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, iii. 171.

tricts, decimation of the property of the Royalists, and other acts of despotic power.

There is but the slightest of clues to the domestic history of Barnstaple and its people during the reign of the saints. The affairs of the Corporation seem to have resumed their former course. It is a mistake to suppose that the revolution was a democratic one in the sense in which we now use that word. The government of the town went on as before and, so far as we know, in the same hands. To say nothing of the dreadful visitation of the plague which again broke out, but in a less severe form, in 1650, the task of recuperating the heavy losses of the four years of military occupation, from which ~~probably~~ no inhabitant escaped, was a powerful soporific. The commercial prosperity of the town did not revive during the remainder of the century. Yet the march of events was followed with interest if not with eagerness by the large majority of the inhabitants who held the popular Parliamentary views — now so utterly perverted. Cromwell's victory over the Scots at Dunbar was duly celebrated by the ringing of bells on the day of thanksgiving. The "crowning mercy" of Worcester was celebrated by shooting off the great guns and by bull-baiting, whilst two thousand Scotch prisoners were rotting in the London prisons. At the solemn Proclamation of the Lord Protector as "Chief Magistrate of the Nations," in July, 1657, 99 lbs. of gunpowder were joyously fired away at a cost of £7. 8s. 6d.; and a feast, at which salmon and wine conspicuously co-operated, was given to the Captains, Commanders and Captains of Foot and

Horse on the occasion, costing the sum of £3. 5s. od.; from which it incidentally appears that a military force was still kept up in the town. But why the bull-ring, which, it is generally supposed, had been put down—not because the sport was cruel to the bull, but because it was an amusement to the people—was swept and garnished for the occasion, is not so clear. It seems to have heralded an approaching reaction. In the following year, after the death of the Great Protector, trumpeters were proclaiming the Lord Richard attended by the usual expenditure of gunpowder for the great guns, wine for the *Maisters*, and beer and tobacco again for the soldiers.¹

So far we have seen no indication of any particular change in the popular sentiment of the people of Barnstaple during the years of the Commonwealth. The old landmarks were undisturbed; the old traditions were not cut adrift. The mayors, with one exception, that of Mr. Dennis, and he, as already mentioned, was factiously opposed for his loyalty, were of the same political complexion as before. Nor are there signs of any disruption on religious grounds, for, if such evidence is of any weight, we find that at this very time were erected the most assertive of the ornate monuments in the parish church—and these were memorials of eminent townsmen who were both Puritans and Parliamentarians. The Restoration of the Monarchy, not an unmixed blessing as we know, was the national reaction; and it was doubtless hailed with as much enthusiasm at Barnstaple as elsewhere. The pre-

¹ *Records*, Nos. lxviii.—lxix.

dominant sentiment of the Corporation had apparently changed with the times; in no other way can the fact be accounted for, that the dull, impenetrable, but sufficiently sagacious, author of the Restoration, George Monk, Duke of Albemarle, a North Devonian of whom North Devon had little reason to be proud, was elected High Steward of the ancient Borough.

THE END



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